the weekly
Standard

MARCH 11, 2002

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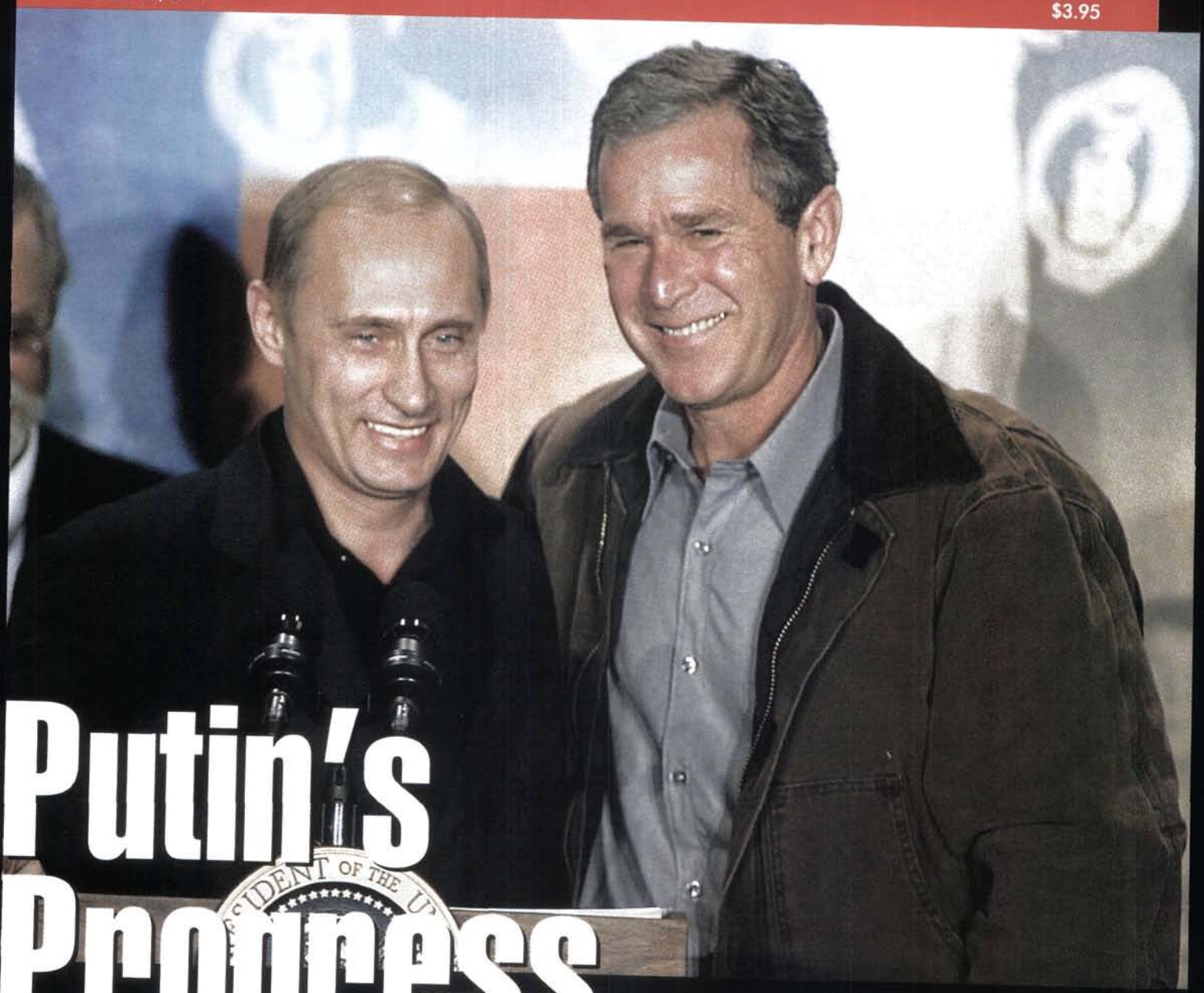
J. BOTTUM • WESLEY J. SMITH

THE HAMILTONIAN MOMENT
DAVID BROOKS



Putin's Progress

Russia joins the West

By Leon Aron

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Homeland INSecurity

More than ever, Americans are looking to our leaders to help secure us and our way of life. That's why the efforts of President Bush and Congress to strengthen our homeland security are so important.

Yet all over America, a growing number of public and private places are unprotected and uninsured against terrorism.

We urge the Senate to approve a comprehensive plan on Terrorism Insurance.

Without the protection of terrorism insurance, businesses, facilities and infrastructure are left uncovered against catastrophic loss.

While we continue to guard against the next terrorist attack, the lack of terrorism insurance is an increasing threat to our economic security.

We urge the Senate to finish the work that the President and the House of Representatives have done to make sure that our country's citizens have access to affordable, comprehensive terrorism insurance. It will be a crucial step that will ensure our country stays secure, protected and strong.

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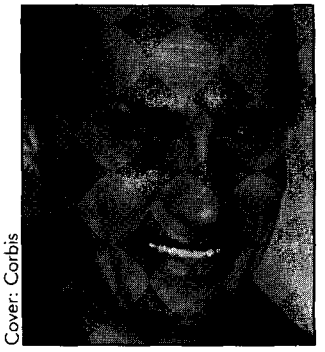

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Death Threats from the *New Statesman*

A young man named Mark Thomas has lately been using his column in London's left-wing *New Statesman* to gripe about the West's indifference to the trade-union movement in Colombia. Last month, because the general secretary of the Yumbo Municipal Workers' Union had received death threats from a right-wing group called the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), Thomas decided it was time for tit-for-tat. Because the United States gives military aid to Colombia, Thomas reasons, George Bush is practically wringing those poor Yumbo-ites' necks with his own hands. Therefore (the syllogism continues), Bush ought to die, and, "if it happened, it should be enough to stop Vice-President Dick Cheney's already weak heart."

That was all Thomas had time for that week, since the rest of his column was taken up with celebrating Margaret Thatcher's recent stroke. "The day she dies, they will be queuing up the M1 to dance on her grave," Thomas wrote. "Thatcher suffering a minor stroke, while it didn't have me throwing a hat in the air, definitely did put a spring in my step."

Poor Thomas, saying all these "controversial" things and still no one seemed to be reading him. So in the *New Statesman*'s latest issue, he has decided to issue an outright death threat, straight to the top: "Given that Osama Bin Laden has a price on his head and is wanted dead or alive for organising acts of terrorism," Thomas writes, "it seems only fair to offer a bounty to anyone who can kill George Bush. After all, he is helping to bankroll the AUC. So my contribution to the war against terrorism is to offer £4,320, my total earnings so far for writing in the *New Statesman*, to anyone who can bag Bush. You don't have to bring me his head or snack on his heart. Nothing weird, just kill him and send me your bank details c/o the *New Statesman*."

Which gives rise to a couple of questions, like:

Why doesn't Thomas go to Yumbo and issue his death threat to the right-wing AUC directly?

If this is the *New Statesman*'s attitude towards political violence, how can it profess outrage that its readers are similarly indifferent to the taking of innocent life in far-off Colombia?

Does the general secretary of the Yumbo Municipal Workers' Union know that these death threats are being issued in his name?

Who at the *New Statesman* decided that Thomas had £4,320 worth of journalism that it wanted to buy?

And finally, isn't it an amazing coincidence that the magazine Thomas writes for has the same name as the great left-wing magazine for which George Orwell, E.M. Forster, and John Maynard Keynes once wrote? ♦

Voucher Vindication

The recent oral arguments before the Supreme Court in the Cleveland school voucher case put vouchers back in the headlines. So you'd think the *New York Times* might take an interest in new research showing the positive effects of vouchers for black students in New York City. Think again.

Last month, a group of researchers at Harvard and Mathematica Policy Research released the latest results of their ongoing voucher study, which revealed large test-score gains after three years for black students receiving vouchers in New York. Indeed, the gains came close to cutting the black-white test-score gap in half. *USA Today*, the *Washington Post*, and CNN all found this newsworthy; the *Times* did not. Which is strange, since the *Times* paid the Harvard study plenty of attention in September 2000—in order to trash it.

Back then, the Harvard/Mathematica team released the results from the end of year two of the study, showing test-score gains for black students. The *Post* and *Times* both ran the story. But just a few days later, Mathematica issued a press release (which they first leaked to the *Times*) saying the gains were premature, because they were concentrated mostly among 6th graders (the study includes grades 3-6). The *Times* trumpeted Mathematica's reservations. The fact that this served to debunk the voucher movement smack dab in the middle of the presidential campaign was doubtless a coincidence. The Harvard group wrote a letter to the editor explaining the grade-level disparity, but the *Times* chose not to print it.

Fast-forward to last month's release of the year-three results, which showed even greater test-score gains, across all grade levels—thus vindicating the Harvard team, as even the Mathematica folks now admit. Not that you would know this from reading the *Times*. ♦

Hollings Rants Again

Have you heard about the latest outrageous statements by Fritz Hollings, chairman of the Enron-probing Senate Commerce Committee? Probably not, because the media blackout of Hollings's excesses continues. First came his comments on February 4, the day Ken Lay took the Fifth before his

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committee. Hollings said White House budget chief Mitch Daniels, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, and Securities and Exchange Commission head Harvey Pitt had been on the Enron payroll. Wrong on all counts. He quoted Daniels as insisting Enron "get" $254 million in the economic stimulus bill. Wrong again. With rare exceptions, not a word of Hollings's novelistic approach to the truth was reported in the mainstream press, including the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*.

Then came outburst number two last week. Hollings said President Clinton had tried to combat Osama bin Laden by shutting down off-shore tax havens. But when George W. Bush became president, the effort ceased, thanks to economic adviser Larry Lindsey, who had served on an Enron advisory panel. The result, according to Hollings: "You had 9/11."

You heard it right. Hollings blamed Bush for the terrorist attacks. Of course, investigators have discovered that offshore tax havens were not used by bin Laden in financing the attacks. Nor is Hollings's potted history of Clinton's anti-bin Laden efforts anything but science fiction. But don't look for any truth-squadding of Hollings from the media—they're too busy going after Republicans. ♦

Candace Quixote

When State University of New York trustee Candace de Russy commented on black studies programs to *Newsday* last month, she represented what she thought was one side of a legitimate academic debate. De Russy, chairman of the SUNY academic standards committee, told *Newsday* that most black studies departments are "flabby, feel-good programs that carry an anti-American bias"—programs that, over the years, "became therapeutic in nature . . . as opposed to conveying solid scholarship."

This barely qualifies as controversial, though it's an opinion rarely voiced by a university trustee. Within a week, the United University Professions, a SUNY union, was calling for De Russy's ouster. A February 9 resolution, approved unanimously by over 250 union delegates, condemned the "ignorance, the bigotry, the intolerance, and the anti-Americanism inherent in Trustee de Russy's public comments."

When it comes to academic rigor, "No field of inquiry, including black studies, is exempt from scrutiny," de Russy says. Rather than bow to the union, she is calling for reform beyond black studies departments. "Group identity-based studies have proliferated wildly over the last 30 years, leaving the undergraduate curriculum fragmented and incoherent," she told THE SCRAPBOOK. The academic casualties of these programs, she adds, are disadvantaged students who are steered into them out of ethnic solidarity.

As for the union's call to dismiss her, de Russy says her biggest detractors—union president William Scheuerman and SUNY-Stony Brook Africana studies chair William McAdoo—should examine black studies programs and prove her wrong. Then they should "thank me for caring about maintaining high intellectual standards at SUNY." ♦

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Casual

Exorcising Berlin

I had never visited Germany—at least not until last week. That's no accident, as I do travel hundreds of thousands of miles every year to a wide variety of destinations, but is instead a choice rooted in history.

World War II was the dominant theme in my house when I was being brought up on the Lower East Side of New York. Before dinner we would gather around the radio to hear news of the war. My father was not the only one in our crowd—which included aunts, uncles, tradesmen, friends, and others who dropped in and out of our apartment—who had relatives in Europe. Nor was he the only one who had some family members caught on the German side, and some on the Russian side when Stalin and Hitler carved up Poland. Those on the German side simply disappeared. We never heard from or about them again.

Those that fell into the hands of the Russians were shipped to Siberia and, miraculously, survived. Well, not really miraculously. I recall our weekly drive to the main New York post office to ship a load of packages to aunts and uncles in Siberian camps. The Russians stole about 90 percent of the food and supplies we sent (which included the parts for a sewing machine that brought in some income for my aunt), delivering just enough to keep us sending more stuff every week.

Most of our relatives somehow survived their Siberian internment and, after the war, were established by my father in a variety of small businesses, a few in France, the rest in America. It is the disparate survival rates of those caught by the Germans and those grabbed by the Russians that may explain why I got to Moscow many years before I agreed to go to Berlin.

Which was no easy decision, even this long after the war. My wife and I visited Vienna a decade or so ago. Cita wanted to study St. Stephen's cathedral and attend the opera, I saw an opportunity to try Vienna's famous pastries. But we didn't linger in Austria. We had been met at the airport by a tall blond fellow, driving a Mercedes, and paging Herr Schteltzer. That alone almost put us on a plane right back to London. Still, we persevered, even after the driver pointed out the balcony from which Hitler addressed the adoring masses after they voluntarily turned their country over to his 1,000-year Reich. But the accumulation of the accents, the history, and the imagined sound of breaking glass proved too much, and within 24 hours we were back in London.

Darren Gygi

Last week, though, there was an invitation from Jeffrey Gedmin, the new head of Aspen Institute Berlin, to participate in a debate about the future of the euro. I decided that over half a century of avoiding a country that my wife assures me has made enormous cultural contributions to the world (including marathon-length operas by Hitler's favorite composer) could no longer be considered rational.

So, off to Berlin, a city unsurprisingly clean and surprisingly uncrowded and, well, sleepy. Either because it is now the 21st century, or because everyone spoke English and was so welcoming, or because our hotel was so wonderful, we had no instant Vienna-like desire to escape. And only a few "blasts from the past."

The first came when our driver-guide offered to show us the new rail station. Cita instantly vetoed that idea: too many memories of stories about and historic photos of death trains and cattle cars. The oddest came in the coffee house where the debate was held. Before things got started, a kids' hockey team passed the hat to raise money for a trip to Moscow, to compete in some tournament or other. A beautiful young boy, perhaps 12 years old, stepped to the microphone and, in German, told his story and asked for donations. Perfectly charming. Except what flashed across my mind was that terrifying scene in *Cabaret*, in which a cherubic youngster sings, with increasing intensity, "Tomorrow Belongs to Me." Fortunately, the moment passed, and I contributed generously to sending these German children off to Moscow, to play on the ice.

At last, the debate. Which my German counterpart opened by saying that he had relatives who died at Verdun, and that European integration was all about preventing the next war. He, too, is haunted by history.

Although I believe that it is the democratic roots that have taken hold in Germany that are the guarantors of peace in our time, and not the bureaucratic regulation factory in Brussels with its new European currency, I was relieved to find that the historic ghosts that haunt me have been laid to rest. Almost.

Germany will, it is clear, be a dominant force on the Continent, but by virtue of its economic, not its military, strength. Most of all, Germany, when not enmeshed in the appallingly anti-American and anti-Israel foreign policy favored by the EU, has been a true friend to Israel. It is Americans, myself included, who have been urging it to step up its military spending. To no avail, I am both sorry and relieved to say.

Irwin M. Stelzer

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More Moyers

Stephen F. Hayes's ludicrous attempt to link the *Columbia Journalism Review*'s praise of Bill Moyers to a grant from the Schumann Foundation (a foundation Moyers heads) missed this important point: The grant was given six years ago when there was a different dean and a different editor who have nothing to do with the magazine's current management ("PBS's Televangelist," Feb. 25). Moyers, by the way, was one of several dozen singled out in a special 40th anniversary issue of *CJR*. Among others were George Will, William Safire, and Rush Limbaugh.

Tom Goldstein
David Laventhol
Columbia School of Journalism
New York, NY

Stephen F. Hayes responds: The facts are these: Moyers's foundation approved the three-year, $2 million grant in 1996. The grant was disbursed in four $500,000 payments in 1996, 1997, and 1998. And, as Goldstein conceded in a subsequent e-mail to me, the Schumann Foundation also gave the school $20,000 annually from 1996-99 to employ a webmaster for the *Columbia Journalism Review*. Moyers subsequently received the "Gold Baton," the "highest honor of the annual Alfred I. DuPont/Columbia University Awards in television and radio." The awards honored programs aired "between July 1, 1998, and June 30, 1999."

So this much is clear: Moyers received Columbia's "highest honor" in broadcast journalism at the same time his foundation was giving more than $2 million to the school. Goldstein and Laventhol object to my citing the November/December 2001 issue of *CJR*. I did so because it was the most recent mention of Moyers, but I certainly could have included others.

For instance, Laventhol himself praises Moyers in the May/June 2000 issue, citing Moyers's "unique, distinguished career in television." Former Columbia dean Joan Konner—who used to work for Moyers and later joined the Schumann Board—devoted her "publisher's note" in July/August 1995 to reprinting Moyers's defense of public television. Indeed, I could have reached back even further, to a 1992 piece written for *CJR* by *Village Voice* writer D.D. Guttenplan, praising a Moyers special on money-in-politics as one of the "high watermarks of televised politics this year." That year, Moyers's foundation gave Columbia's journalism school $340,426.

It's quite possible that Moyers would have won such adulation from Columbia's journalism school and *CJR* even if his foundation hadn't contributed millions of dollars over the past decade. But if it is "ludicrous" merely to suggest that such a relationship be disclosed, then Columbia's J-school must have rewritten its rules since I graduated.

Chicom.com

Ethan Gutmann assumes all things Chinese Communist are inherently evil and that a free Internet is what is best for China ("Who Lost China's Internet?" Feb. 25). This sort of writing arouses anti-American sentiment in China.

Some of the article's claims are unsubstantiated. Most Chinese Internet users don't go through a traceable subscription-based "ISP" as we know them in the United States. They either use Internet cafés or prepaid Internet cards (purchased on the street just like prepaid phone cards) with home computers. Contrary to the article's suggestion, Internet cafés are springing up, not closing down, everywhere. And the prepaid cards are entirely anonymous, unless the government takes the extra step of tracing the phone call. Chinese portals require a government ID card number to sign up for a free e-mail account, but officials don't check the information for validity. In my use of university computer centers, public Internet cafés, and prepaid dialup cards, I haven't noticed any of the signs of systemic surveillance described in the article (although censorship is present in bulletin board posts and DNS restrictions).

More importantly, though, I'm not sure that companies like Yahoo! and Cisco have a moral responsibility (as the author suggests) to refuse to do business with Beijing or to sabotage Beijing's efforts at controlling information. In the United States, if a company wants to install network filters to prevent employees from doing inappropriate things on the Internet with company time and resources, few people would object. We only have debates when such systems are installed in public places like schools and libraries. Even then the filtering proponents have a real argument. They believe in free speech, but they also believe the benefits of filtering outweigh the restrictions on individual rights.

Micah Arbisser
Beijing, China

Ethan Gutmann responds: Micah Arbisser assumes that the Chinese people want their computer use to be restricted and monitored. Not just on the job, not just in cybercafés, but in their homes. Sure, prepaid Internet cards seem anonymous, unless, as Arbisser correctly stipulates, "the government takes the extra step of tracing the phone call." This is precisely why Chinese ISPs and cybercafés are required to save surfing histories and user information for State Security's use. Unfortunately we won't know if Arbisser would win his bet. We can't legally poll the Chinese people on any topic without first submitting our survey questions to the Chinese State Statistical Bureau. Unless they have the same confidence that Arbisser has in the answer, they aren't likely to allow a test of his hypothesis.

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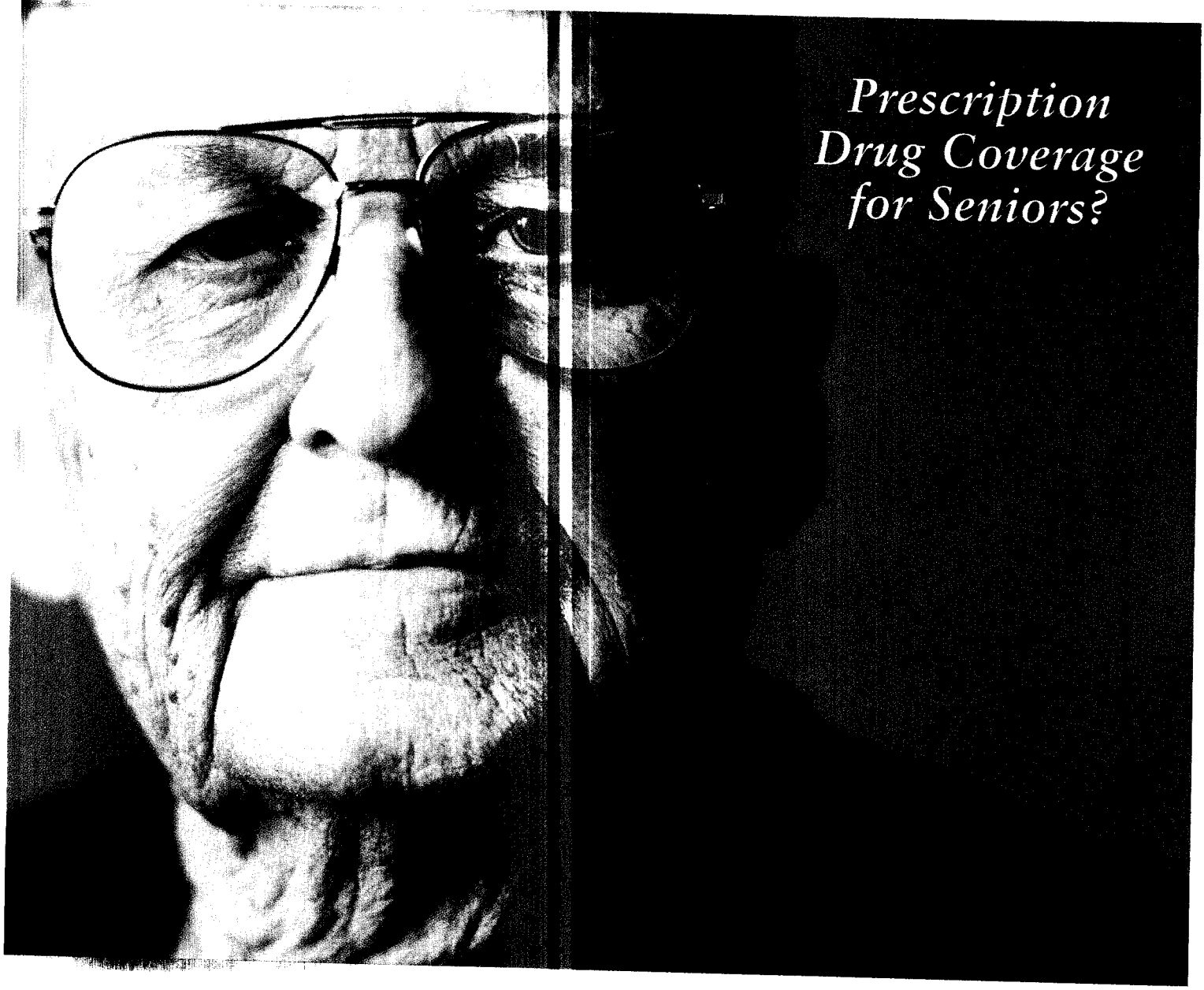

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the weekly Standard

The Biotech Project

Recent weeks have seen news of biotech advances all along the front: cloned cats, artificial wombs, nascent human-animal hybrids, genetic selection of embryos for implantation, fetal-tissue manipulation—and on, and on, nearly every day bringing some news item about the technology that is redefining what it means to be human.

The question is, do we want this redefinition? Like a giant jigsaw puzzle as each piece is put in place, the picture of the brave new world of eugenic biotechnology is coming clear, and it is an ugly and frightening picture of designed descendants, commodified body parts, manipulated babies, and life itself twisted to little more than the attempt to prove that it is possible to twist life.

The time to stop this is now, and the place to stop it is human cloning. We must send a message that some things we will not do, even though we can. We must draw a line and say that we do not simply acquiesce in the biotechnologists' willful and unthinking desire to fool with the basic stuff of life.

In the next two months, the Senate will debate the question of cloning, with three proposals now in play: the Brownback-Landrieu bill to ban all cloning (echoing the bill already passed by the House of Representatives), and the Feinstein-Kennedy and Harkin-Specter bills, both of which allow scientists to perform so-called "therapeutic" cloning, while prohibiting the bringing of those clones to birth in "reproductive" cloning.

THE WEEKLY STANDARD has editorialized before about the moral fecklessness of human cloning. The attempt to allow cloned embryos and then to ban the birth at which they naturally aim is a bizarre and unworkable compromise. How exactly could we enforce it without the courts ordering women to have abortions? How could we prosecute violators without an unattainable knowledge of a scientist's intention in creating a clone? And how could we call the compromise ethical when it would establish in law a class of embryos that it is a crime *not* to destroy, *not* to treat as disposable tissue? The attempt to ban only reproductive cloning will prove simply an invitation for scientists to get their techniques right until the pressure to bring one of those clones to birth becomes overwhelming. In truth, the only way to ban reproductive human cloning is by banning *all* human cloning, and the only bill now before the Senate that will do that is the Brownback-Landrieu bill.

Indeed, for Senators Feinstein and Kennedy to label their alternative the "Human Cloning Prohibition Act" is about as accurate as calling a bill to license liquor stores a bill to eliminate drunkenness. But this studied disingenuousness of language appears all through the cloning argument. The paralyzed movie actor Christopher Reeve has become the spokesman for the pro-cloning forces, and he claimed at a press conference last week that stem cells obtained from cloned embryos offer him the chance for a cure. The medical evidence is dubious at best. But, worse, Reeve went on to justify cloning on the grounds that "we are not talking about destroying life, which begins at the moment of fertilization of a sperm and an egg. The public must understand that stem cells can be taken out of embryos that are not really embryos as they are not fertilized." This stands in contradiction to his claim, while he was one of the chief spokesmen for biotechnology during last year's embryonic stem-cell debate, that the whole question of stem cells didn't involve cloning since the necessary components could be obtained by harvesting the unused embryos left over from attempts at in-vitro fertilization.

But this is how the brave new world project advances. Each small piece of the jigsaw puzzle is held up by its advocates as though it existed in isolation, as though it implied nothing about what is to come. And then we are asked how we could possibly be opposed to it. Last year, it was how we could object to embryonic stem-cell research when that doesn't require cloning embryos for research. This year, it is how we can object to cloning embryos for research when that doesn't require bringing clones to birth. And next year, it will be how we can object to bringing clones to birth when that doesn't require the genetic redesign of our descendants.

Meanwhile, the whole picture is filled in, bit by bit. With its desire to clone, the biotech revolution has set itself against the human world of bodily birth and death, unique individuals living and dying in connected families. It promises instead a place of endless mirrors reflecting nothing but themselves, a sterile realm of childless parents and parentless children, a world turned strange, inhospitable, and inhuman.

This cannot be what we want the future to look like. But the future *will* look like this—unless we start by saying no to cloning and persuading the Senate to pass the Brownback-Landrieu bill.

—J. Bottum, for the Editors

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The Senate's New Mr. Conservative

Mitch McConnell loses on campaign finance, but gains influence. BY FRED BARNES

THIS IS A MOMENT OF DEFEAT for Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky. But he's hardly in agony. He concedes campaign finance reform, which he's been fighting in one form or another for more than a decade, will soon be enacted. Yet he struggles on. At best, he can hold up the legislation for a few weeks, time enough, he thinks, to gain a few small concessions from its sponsors. Once the measure is signed by President Bush, he promises to be plaintiff number one in a lawsuit challenging its constitutionality. Sure, the media will again denounce McConnell. "I enjoy their ire," he says.

McConnell's role in the Senate—indeed, inside the Republican party and among conservatives—is growing. He's now "counselor" to Senate GOP leader Trent Lott. He attends leadership meetings and offers advice on strategy. Later this year, he's likely to win the post of Republican whip, replacing Don Nickles of Oklahoma, who's term-limited in the post. He's running against Larry Craig of Idaho, but McConnell's allies insist he's already lined up enough votes. If so, he'll give Senate Republicans a second-in-command who's as combative and relentless as House GOP whip Tom DeLay.

McConnell's rise is remarkable in a number of ways. He's known far more for what he opposes than for what he favors. In fact, he's not identified with any particular initiative. Rather than "growing" in the eyes of the Washington establishment since he was first elected in 1984—which means drifting to the left—McConnell has become more conservative. Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina once feared McConnell would be a tepid defender of the tobacco industry. As it turned out, he's ferocious in fighting the anti-tobacco lobby. McConnell is anything but a darling of the media. The wall of his Senate office is covered with dozens of hostile cartoons from newspapers. "I'm proud of my enemies," McConnell says. "I wouldn't trade them for anything." Nor is McConnell the most popular Republican among his peers. "He's something of an acquired taste," says former senator Slade Gorton of Washington state.

Mitch McConnell

Earl Keleny

There are basically five criteria for being an effective *conservative* leader in Congress, and McConnell, like DeLay, meets all five. One, you must be a principled conservative, not just temperamentally or situationally conservative. Two, you must be unaffected by sharply critical press coverage, even oblivious to it. Three, you must be willing and sometimes eager to take on unpopular causes. Four, you must find satisfaction in blocking bad legislation, using any parliamentary tools available. And five, you must have the ability to build coalitions.

When McConnell arrived in Washington after upsetting Democratic Sen. Dee Huddleston, he was largely an unknown quantity to conservatives. He wasn't viewed as a future leader. McConnell says he's "always been well right of center," but he acknowledges his years in Congress have also had an effect. "When you witness so many bad ideas gain steam, it does have a tendency to make you more conservative." Helms, for one, soon saw McConnell as someone who would "advance in the leadership." McConnell did, only gradually. He chaired the ethics and commerce committees, ran the National Republican Senatorial Committee, the campaign arm of Senate Republicans, from 1996 to 2000, then became Lott's adviser. McConnell is expected to win reelection easily in November.

McConnell's relationship with the media is mostly adversarial. He's feuded with his hometown paper, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, over fundraising for the McConnell Center for Political Leadership at the University of Louisville, his alma mater, and connections his wife, Labor Secretary Elaine Chao, has with China. "He's not a publicity hound of any kind," says Gorton. But neither is he like Helms or President Reagan in their knack for ignoring the press. "They actually didn't read the press," McConnell says. "I read it and enjoy it, but I'm unfazed by it." This, of course, is empowering, allowing him to take strong conservative positions without fretting about press coverage. In fact, McConnell says he takes "perverse pleasure" in alienating the media on campaign finance reform.

And not only on campaign reform.

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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McConnell is a magnet for unpopular causes—or at least causes the mainstream media dislike. He's pro-tobacco, pro-gun, pro-business, skeptical of environmental regulation and election reform. His signature issue is campaign restrictions, contesting them. He first delved into the subject while teaching a night course in American political parties in the mid-1970s. "I've had both an academic and practical interest in this," McConnell says. When he got to Washington, he quickly realized he knew more about the subject than anyone else. "And often," he says, "knowledge is power."

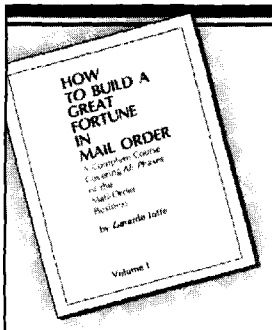
McConnell's zeal in opposing campaign finance reform has never slackened. In 1990, while he was running for reelection, he led a successful Senate filibuster against a reform bill. He was warned this would hurt him politically. But he won, 52 percent to 48 percent, and came away convinced that fighting campaign finance reform is risk-free. "Nobody in American politics has ever won or lost an election on this issue," McConnell insists. Just before the 1994 election, after reform bills had passed both houses, he put together a GOP filibuster of the resolution naming conferees to a House-Senate session to meld the two measures. It worked, the bills died, and several weeks later Republicans won their most sweeping victory in congressional elections in the second half of the twentieth century.

Even in defeat this year, McConnell gets credit for warding off a far more sweeping version of campaign finance reform. The 1994 bill would have instituted public financing of congressional races and put stiffer limits on independent issue ads. The bill President Bush will sign is far less comprehensive and is studded with loopholes. Also, McConnell has stacked the Federal Election Commission with anti-reform Republicans. He overcame the opposition of President Clinton and Senate Democrats to win an FEC seat for the brightest intellectual foe of campaign reform, a young Harvard Law School graduate named Bradley Smith.

McConnell delights in thwarting liberal legislation. He doesn't accept "the notion my career should be measured by how many bills I get passed. I think stopping bad legislation is an important part of being a U.S. senator." He's proud to have joined Phil Gramm of Texas in defeating President Clinton's health care plan in 1994. He's happy to have watered down the patients' bill of rights that cleared the Senate. "It doesn't bother me to use parliamentary tools to stop bad things from happening," he says. "I take more pleasure in the things we've prevented from happening" than in those which passed.

What distinguishes McConnell from many conservatives in Congress is his skill in patching together coalitions. "You can't [block bad legislation] by yourself," he says. "You have to inspire the loyalty of others." Even as campaign finance reform nears final passage, McConnell has collected enough senators to demand time for negotiations on small but important changes. (He lacked the votes to obstruct the bill.) And when Democrats sought to gut antifraud provisions in the separate election reform bill last week, he and Kit Bond of Missouri organized a filibuster to counter them.

The retirement of Gramm and Helms later this year makes McConnell's role all the more significant. McConnell says he's not as "hard-core" as Helms, and he's more selective in picking targets than Gramm. Nonetheless, he'll become the most important conservative in the Senate in impeding liberal legislation. The good news is Sen. John McCain, McConnell's opponent on campaign reform, was correct in his assessment of McConnell last week. "There are few things more daunting in politics," he said, "than the determined opposition of Sen. McConnell." ♦



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Ariel Bombs

The Israeli prime minister's fatal hesitation.

BY TOM ROSE

Jerusalem

TO UNDERSTAND WHY Ariel Sharon's first year as Israel's prime minister may not be followed by a second, one need look no further back than February 21. After months of virtual silence, Sharon addressed his people in a nationally televised address following the worst week of violence in the 16 months since Yasser Arafat launched his terrorist war against Israeli civilians.

What did the legendary warrior turned prime minister plan to do to fight the terrorism that was engulfing the country? Sharon had been elected in February 2001 by one of the most lopsided margins in Israeli history, crushing Ehud Barak after the disastrous policy of appeasing Arab and Palestinian demands had exploded in Barak's face in September 2000. The outcome of the election had very little to do with Sharon himself and everything to do with the actions of others, especially Barak, Arafat, and Bill Clinton.

Sharon's campaign—foreshadowing his premiership—was largely invisible. He said little and promised less. His few public appearances were tightly scripted to keep him far from the press. This defensive strategy was wise. Why risk a huge and growing lead by exposing a gaffe-prone candidate who just six months before had been considered unelectable and hugely unpopular?

But what worked in February 2001 was proving ruinous in February 2002. Leaders are expected to lead, especially in times of crisis, and Israel's crisis has been getting graver. The days leading up to Sharon's February 21 address were filled with despondency and gloom. Normally resilient Israelis, who pride themselves on needing nothing, least of all hand-holding, from a political class they hold in contempt, were eager to hear from their leader that their cause was not lost, that Israel was not a ship without a captain.

Rather than address the people directly from his office, Sharon opted to speak in the Israeli equivalent of the White House press room, addressing a roomful of journalists. He approached the podium looking tired, even slightly disoriented. It was but the prelude.

Ariel Sharon

Illustration by Drew Friedman

No, Sharon confessed, he didn't have a plan to stop Palestinian terrorism, and Israelis who criticized him for it were disloyal. Nothing could be done, he implied, because his hands were tied by forces much stronger than he. Stammering through his text, a prime minister once synonymous with bullish Zionism delivered one of the most devastating lines in the history of Israeli politics: "Israel is not collapsing." His speech designed to outline his government's approach to a war against Israelis never used the word "victory."

That Sharon's speech had been a debacle was immediately reflected in the polls. The extraordinarily large television audience, which had come looking to be uplifted, was left reeling. In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, a senior Bush administration official wondered whether Israel's lack of resolve, personified in Sharon, weakened Israel as an American ally. Had Sharon been prime minister of Britain in 1940, one Israeli commentator remarked matter-of-factly in his post-address analysis, Britain would have fallen to the Nazis.

Before the night was out, Sharon's approval rating had dropped below 35 percent. Commentators were speculating how long the country could tolerate him at the helm.

In the days since February 21, Israelis have seen fresh evidence that it isn't their country that is rotting, just their leadership. While still not permitted to end the Arafat regime or to destroy the terrorist organizations at his command, the Israeli Defense Forces have continued to demonstrate tactical proficiency in the limited operations to capture or kill specific terrorist leaders on which they have been permitted to embark.

But if Sharon withholds the order to destroy Arafat's regime, this is not because he thinks it can't be done, or because he thinks it wrong. All evidence leads to the conclusion that Sharon, of all people, realizes the only path to peace is the destruction, by force if necessary, of terrorist organizations and infrastructure. He knows that movement toward any lasting settlement is impossible while the Palestinians are led by a dictator committed to Israel's destruction and bred on a culture that glorifies hatred and murder. Sharon's own deputy prime minister, Natan Sharansky, vigorously argues that Israel must demand a fundamental change in the way Palestinians govern themselves in order to have any hope of solving this conflict.

So why does Sharon hesitate? The reason, unfortunately, seems to be personal ambition. Sharon spent three

Tom Rose is publisher of the Jerusalem Post.

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decades in pursuit of the office he now occupies. Were he to forcefully wage war against the Palestinian Authority that sponsors and shelters the terrorists, his foreign minister, Shimon Peres, would defect, and the government would fall. New elections would almost certainly mean a new prime minister, since everyone expects that Bibi Netanyahu would defeat Sharon in the Likud party primary. The irony is that, if Sharon acted boldly and decisively, he might so change the political dynamic that Netanyahu might be unable to run. And if Sharon fails to act boldly, he is likely to fall anyway, perhaps because of defections from his right and from Sharansky.

But Sharon remains paralyzed. A phony Saudi peace "plan" therefore fills the vacuum he has created, allowing the world to forget who is responsible for the terror, and encouraging elements in the Bush administration to fall back into the grip of the "peace process," thus relegitimizing Arafat's Palestinian Authority. And Israel remains without real leadership. ♦

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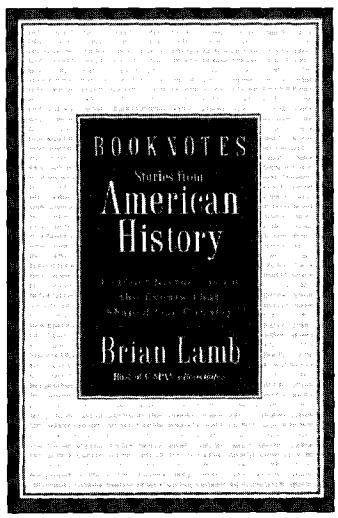

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Readin', Ritalin and 'Rithmetic

Education's new three R's.

BY MELANA ZYLA VICKERS

EVERY DAY AT LUNCH HOUR last year, Karen Gayhart busied herself piling up the green, plastic pill trays at the health clinic of Great Neck Middle School in Virginia Beach, Va. Scooping out little, round Ritalin or Adderall pills one at a time, she and other clinic workers quickly emptied four of the 30-dose trays into the hands of the adolescents lining up at the office door.

In this public school serving an affluent section of the city, roughly 10 percent of the students were taking highly addictive, mind-altering prescription drugs every morning, noon, and night. All in a controversial effort to improve their ability to settle down and concentrate on learning.

This year, Gayhart handles only two trays. Is that because some of the students' parents, teachers, and doctors have backed away from the drugs, recoiling from the now-familiar news that their community is among those that lead the nation in dispensing psychostimulants to children? Is it because they've heard the studies suggesting Ritalin may cause long-term, genetic-level brain changes in children? Or because they've read the Drug Enforcement Administration warning that high doses of such drugs "often produce agitation, tremors, euphoria, tachycardia, palpitations and hypertension" or that "psychotic episodes, paranoid delusions, hallucinations and bizarre behavioral characteristics similar to amphetamine-like stimulant toxicity have been associated with methylphenidate (Ritalin) abuse"?

Melana Zyla Vickers is a columnist for TechCentralStation.com.

Nope. "It's because kids are taking morning doses that last longer," says Gayhart, explaining they don't need to top off at lunch. Carol Flach, who supervises close to 100 nurses in the district, sees the trend in all her schools: Some parents may have stopped giving their children the drugs, she says, but most of the noontime change is attributable to extended-release versions of the drugs.

The experience at Great Neck Middle School neatly illustrates how, nationwide, the drugs used to treat children's Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) have gone from popularity to infamy to stealth. The disorder—estimated by a panel of experts convened by the National Institutes of Health to affect 3 to 5 percent of school-age children—has among its core symptoms "developmentally inappropriate levels of attention, concentration, activity, distractibility, and impulsivity" that can impair a child's functioning at home, school, and with peers. Through the 1980s and early 1990s, many parents who had their difficult-to-control children diagnosed with ADHD reached for drugs such as Ritalin, which appeared in short-term clinical trials to alleviate the symptoms of the disorder.

Soon after finding their way into parents' medicine cabinets, though, the drugs met with a firestorm of controversy when reporters and politicians noticed that the number of prescriptions for ADHD drugs was approaching 20 million per year. Preschool children were being given the drug, news reports said, and some parents were complaining of pressure from schools to put their children on

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the drugs. All of this despite the fact that the condition which the drugs are meant to treat is the subject of heated dispute among medical professionals, and that the drugs' benefits are limited at best.

There is no diagnostic test for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, according to the NIH panel. Its symptoms are the same as those for childhood depression, anxiety, chronic stress, and abuse. The NIH experts add that "further research is necessary to firmly establish ADHD as a brain disorder" and that there are "questions concerning the literal existence of the disorder, whether it can be reliably diagnosed, and, if treated, what interventions are the most effective."

But rather than decline in the face of such uncertainty and controversy, Ritalin use has exploded: 17,618 kilograms of Ritalin and like drugs will be produced this year, up from 14,957 kilos in 2000 and 3,708 kilos in 1992. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder has become the most commonly diagnosed mental health condition among children in the United States, and over 80 percent of the children so diagnosed take drugs as treatment.

Two potential brakes on the drugs' spread—one legal, one in public-health research—have nonetheless begun to get traction. Republicans in the state legislatures of Connecticut, Michigan, and Virginia have pushed laws restricting their public-school systems from pressuring parents to put their rambunctious children on psychostimulants. Politicians in Minnesota, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin are following suit.

Meanwhile, public-health researchers and doctors scattered across the country are shedding some skeptical light on the drugs' effectiveness. Take Gretchen LeFever, a psychologist and researcher at Eastern Virginia Medical School. She has found that while the use of drugs for ADHD "may reduce hyperactivity, there's no indication the child will learn any more effectively." Her findings, published in January, dovetail with one of the less-noticed conclusions of the NIH experts—that while drug treatment improves core symptoms of ADHD, "there is little improvement in academic achievement or social skills."

LeFever's research has sounded alarm bells in the past. She and colleagues pointed out that in the Virginia Beach area in 1995-96, a whopping 20 percent of white, male fifth-graders were taking drugs for ADHD. Rates for minorities and girls were lower. LeFever has now gone back and studied about 1,000 children in the area in an effort to evaluate the drugs' effect on learning. The results: ADHD children who take Ritalin-

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like drugs are just as likely as unmedicated ADHD children to be suspended or expelled from school or to repeat a grade.

This comes as no surprise to psychiatrists such as Glen Pearson, a medical director for the Dallas Independent School District and former president of the American Society for Adolescent Psychiatry. "Educational improvement is not an expected outcome from Ritalin administration," he says. As a stimulant, Ritalin may well help kids "pay attention and stay task-focused," but that's all. "It has no long-term benefits, or broader immediate consequences other than side effects."

But the absence of educational benefits will surprise the tens of thousands of parents influenced by the claims of CHADD, the main advocacy group for Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

In a fact sheet on "medical management," CHADD warns that inadequate treatment of attention deficit disorders can lead to "grave consequences," including "academic failure, and a possible increase in the risk of later antisocial and criminal behavior." The advocates may not quite be claiming that drugs can help kids educationally, but they're hinting pretty darned hard.

Since Ritalin and the other drugs aren't proven to benefit learning, they're at best discipline in pill-form, a means of keeping children from acting up at school. As such, they may well be more helpful to overworked teachers and other students than to the pill-taking student himself.

It's that apparent convenience for the school system that is objectionable to an increasing number of state politicians. After *USA Today* and other newspapers published stories in recent years about parents being pushed by teachers to put children on Ritalin or risk intervention by local child protective services, the politicians pushed back.

"It's got to be very difficult to teach or attempt to teach a class when you've got children that are acting out or have behavioral problems," concedes Lenny Winkler, a nurse and Republican state representative in Connecticut who spearheaded the first state laws on Ritalin last summer. But medicating the children "is a quick fix with no real thought process involved. There needs to be a lot more done than putting a child on medication and thinking the problem is solved," says Winkler. The Connecticut law and others like it effectively prevent teachers from recommending directly to parents that a child be seen by a doctor or medicated for an attention deficit disorder. Such recommendations are left to school mental-health experts or the parents themselves. The laws also restrict child-welfare workers from intervening to force parents to keep kids on the drugs.

Not all school officials agree with the restrictions. The Connecticut municipality of Meriden is risking state financial penalties by so far failing to implement the state law. In Michigan, where a similar package of laws is weaving its way through the legislative process, school superintendents are voicing opposition. "People with experience in the issue need to study it, [legislators can't] just sit down and write legislation just because some parents want it," argues Nancy Stanley, associate executive director of the Michigan Association of School Administrators. Stanley adds that the laws aren't necessary because "teachers can't prescribe the drug. We haven't had one teacher prescribe drugs."

True, if facile. It's doctors, primarily in high-income white areas and low-income minority areas of the country, who write the scripts. And it appears from national data that once a knot of parents and doctors in a community reach consensus about the benefits of Ritalin, others quickly follow. "Sometimes a school sends a note to the pediatrician, and the pediatrician interprets it as the school concluding the kid has ADHD," says LeFever, the Virginia Beach researcher. The doctor will accept the conclusion, figuring the school officials spend more time with the kid than he or she does.

And where there's a diagnosis, prescriptions aren't far behind. "Physicians and the public are becoming more comfortable with treating a variety of ailments medically and are becoming more comfortable with drugs," LeFever says. In 1998, doctors made 2.3 references to psychotropic drug treatment per doctor visit, she notes.

To be sure, there are tens of thousands of children whose hyperactivity and inability to concentrate lead their desperate parents to seek medical help. And the vast majority of teachers and pediatricians are probably counseling them with the best interests of the children at heart.

But something is amiss. With the side effects of the drugs unknown, and their educational utility in doubt, the American dependency on Ritalin and other behavioral drugs for students seems far higher than it ought to be, yet it is still growing. If the state laws don't have an effect, what will? Are we really prepared to redefine childhood as an ailment, and medicate it until it goes away? ♦

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Credible Threats

The strategic brilliance of Bush's "axis of evil."

BY JAMES D. MILLER

CAN THREATS ALONE tame the axis of evil? In his State of the Union speech, President Bush promised to take preemptive action against Iran, Iraq, and North Korea if they don't abandon their efforts to foment terrorism and perfect weapons of mass destruction. The United States could inflict horrific damage on these countries and, more important, on their dictators. These three countries are ruled by selfish men. If they really believed that Bush would carry out his threat, then all three countries would probably yield. But is Bush's threat credible?

When the world's dominant power issues a military threat there are but three possible outcomes:

1. The threat is believed and the adversary acquiesces.
2. The threat is not believed but the United States backs down.
3. The threat is not believed and the United States goes to war.

It's true that the president indicated during his recent trip to Asia that the United States has no intention of attacking North Korea. The retraction of his threat to North Korea was a blunder. It made it less likely that his other threats would be believed. Saddam Hussein, for example, could be tempted to believe that since Bush backed down with North Korea, he might never attack Iraq.

Aside from the handling of North Korea, though, the administration has skillfully threatened the rest of the axis of evil, especially Iraq. The term "axis of evil" itself is a brilliant strategic utterance that increases the credibility of Bush's threat. When Bush promised that he would take action against the axis of evil, he clearly, simply, and memorably stated his objective. He thus insured that he will pay a political price if he does nothing against the tyrannical triad.

And even if Bush is beyond all crass political concerns, Iraq probably believes that he is driven by self-interest. Bush's threat thus gains credibility if it's thought that he is politically better off taking preemptive military action if Iraq doesn't yield to his demands. Consequently, Democrats could plausibly advance U.S. interests by saying that they fear a fresh war would help Republicans. Ideally, Iraq should believe that Bush is looking for any excuse to fight.

Colin Powell acted deftly when he suggested the French foreign minister was getting the vapors. He signaled that the United States wouldn't care if we incurred Europe's disapproval.

Jimmy Carter and the French foreign minister have said that the "axis of evil" phrase is simplistic and dangerous. Such publicly expressed sentiments show that these men themselves are unsophisticated and reckless. By labeling the phrase simplistic, these critics reveal their ignorance of its credibility-enhancing properties. Furthermore, by publicly expressing doubts about preemptive actions, they signal to Iraq that Bush will face considerable opposition if he ever attempts to carry out his threat.

If our allies don't support a preemptive strike, Bush must clearly indicate that he doesn't value our allies' opinions. Remember, Saddam is wondering if Bush really would attack. Anything that would make it more costly for Bush to take preemptive action makes his threat less believable. Colin Powell therefore acted deftly when he suggested that the French foreign minister was getting the vapors. By mocking the French, Powell made Bush's threat more credible because he signaled that the United States wouldn't care if we incurred Europe's disapproval.

To further ratchet up the pressure, Bush could impose a deadline for Iraq to comply with his demands. If this deadline passed with no action, Bush would look foolish. Consequently, Bush's desire to avoid humiliation would make his threat more credible.

Our enemies will comply only if non-compliance may have a heavy cost. Absent an immediate deadline, they will consider yielding only if they face some prospect of sudden assault. Consequently, if Bush is unwilling to impose a deadline, he must make Iraq fear a surprise attack.

Not including China in the axis of evil was tactically sound. China's atomic weapons probably put her beyond our military's reach. Had Bush included China it would have signaled that the axis of evil consisted of countries he morally disapproved of, rather than regimes he intends on challenging. Of course, to the degree Bush changed his mind about North Korea, it probably would have been better not to include it in the first place.

Press accounts indicate that the United States might be preparing to attack Iraq. Saddam surely knows that if we tried to remove him from power then we would prevail. Our goal, however, should be victory plain and simple. If we can achieve victory without further combat, all the better. If we can convince Saddam that we are willing to topple him, then he might back down, or others might topple him for us. The more credible a threat, the less likely it will have to be executed. ♦

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ADVERTISEMENT

"The Chicken Or The Egg"

"Wouldn't you know it would come to this," said Horace Greeley, the legendary media great. "With a whoop and a holler, listen to every screaming liberal yelling at G.W. over Enron. There goes New York City's 'Old Grey Lady' screaming like a Banshee, slapping her hips in joy over Dubya's embarrassment."

"I know. It's like they're celebrating July 4 early, even though there's plenty of time Left."

"That's not all," continued the great Mr. Greeley. "Like Tuesday follows Monday, hear the howl coming from yet another lady. She hails from Washington, DC. Her family name is Post. She hankers to hug G.W. in a deadly embrace. Unlike his predecessor, Bill, and his way with young interns, Dubya rebuffs her. She wants to waltz away the presidency with him. The Post lady doesn't understand that up to now G.W. and Laura rival another happy dancing pair. Unlike Hillary and Bill, the Bushes compare with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire."

"Good one, Mr. Greeley. That's a good one."

"My friend, did you hear the latest kind of poem on G.W. and Bill Clinton?" Horace Greeley asked.

"No"

"It's this," he continues - "People judge people by the company they keep - Even the ones they meet in their sleep- But only in a nightmare does it seem fair to say - A very good man might stumble upon a Ken Lay - That's unlike Bill, who always pants for a call- From a vulnerable young White House intern just down the hall. So, what do you think?"

"O.K., Sir. All's fair in politics."

"True enough," said Mr. Greeley. "How did Bill get away with so much? He's an adulterer, womanizer, felony forgiver, and can't tell the truth. No sins with him. It's only always 'inappropriate'. There goes another good English word down the drain."

"Just wouldn't you know," was all I could say.

"Go west, young man, go west" Mr. Greeley told me. "It's still today in the east. It's a little earlier in the west. There's enough light left there to see," said Horace Greeley.

"See what?" I asked.

"Just this," Mr. Greeley replied. "Which comes first, the chicken or the egg?"

"Tell me, please."

"I'd say first comes the chicken, that's G.W. It's like he's still at bat, at the worst, all he's done is hit a 'fowl' ball. As for Bill, at bar or on the field, he was always a kind of rotten egg. If he ever hit, it was always his fly. And wouldn't you know."

"May I quote you Sir?", I asked.

"Sure, sure. From where I am up here", Horace Greeley told me, "by the time it gets to you down there the 'Old Grey Lady', her Washington Post friend and their legion of liberal followers, this will happen. For G.W., they'll have all the news not fit to print. For Bill, they'll have all the news that is. Who is there fair enough to care?"

"Sometimes, I wonder," I said.

"The same for me," he said.

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Putin's Progress

Russia joins the West

By Leon Aron

Prior to September 11, 2001, few would have predicted that Russia would back the United States so firmly in its response to the terrorist attacks. Now, after a remarkable show of solidarity and even crucial assistance to Washington and its allies, the question remains, why did Russia do it? Were its moves tactical, their effect destined to be short-lived? Or were they evidence of a deeper transformation of the U.S.-Russia relationship? Might they actually mean that the other nuclear superpower is moving toward not just occasional cooperation, but durable partnership with the West, perhaps even someday an alliance? Before attempting to tackle questions so fundamental to U.S. national security policy, let us recall what Russia did after the terrorist attacks:

September 11. President Vladimir Putin was the first foreign leader to reach President George W. Bush on Air Force One. In addition, in a nationally televised statement to the American people, Putin called the attacks "a brazen challenge to the whole of humanity, at least to civilized humanity." He told Americans, "We are with you, we entirely and fully share and experience your pain. We support you." Further, Russia responded to the heightened state of alert of the U.S. armed forces by standing down its troops and canceling scheduled strategic bomber and missile exercises.

Within hours of the news from America, Russians began to take flowers, icons, burning candles, handwritten notes, and stuffed animals to the U.S. embassy on Novinsky Boulevard in Moscow and to the U.S. consulates in St. Petersburg and Ekaterinburg. This would continue for days.

September 12. Putin phoned Bush again to discuss cooperation against terrorism. The Central Blood Transfusion Station in Moscow announced a blood drive for the victims in the United States. The station was flooded with volunteer donors, as were the Russian Red Cross and the Ministry for Emergency Situations.

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September 13. By presidential decree, a national minute of silence at noon commemorated "the victims of the tragedy in the United States." Flags flew at half-mast, and television programs were interrupted with images from the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

At Russia's instigation, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council condemned the attacks in the strongest terms and pledged an "intensification" of cooperation "to fight the scourge of terrorism."

September 22. With Russia's blessing, two C-130 U.S. military cargo planes and 100 U.S. military personnel arrived at an airbase near Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

September 24. In a televised address to his nation, Putin announced that Russia had agreed to overflights by American and allied planes and to their use of former Soviet airbases in the Central Asian nations and had shared intelligence about the "infrastructure, locations, and training facilities of international terrorists."

September 25. Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov announced that U.S. troops could use military facilities in Tajikistan to launch strikes into Afghanistan.

October 3. More than 1,000 troops of the U.S. Army's Tenth Mountain Division landed in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—the first regular U.S. Army infantry unit to be deployed on a combat mission in the territory of the former Soviet Union.

October 3-4. Putin made the first visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels by any Russian or Soviet leader. After meetings with the secretary general, Putin announced Russia's "great readiness to cooperate and interact" with NATO. He also signaled a softening in Russia's opposition to further NATO enlargement, even including the three former Soviet republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

October 16. Putin announced the closing of two foreign military bases and listening posts, at Lourdes, Cuba, and Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.

The Lourdes complex, established in 1964, was Russia's largest military base and electronic listening post in the Western Hemisphere. It housed up to 1,600 full-time personnel. In addition to gathering and analyzing U.S. communications, Lourdes reportedly guided Russian

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intelligence agents in North America, provided links to the Russian spy satellite network, sent instructions to Russian ships and submarines, and tracked U.S. naval activities in the Caribbean. Russia decided to abandon Lourdes over the "complete" opposition of the Cuban government, which called the closing "a grave threat to Cuba's security" and a "special gift" to President Bush. In Moscow, Communist and nationalist deputies in the Duma were similarly indignant.

The Soviet Union, then Russia, had maintained the base at Cam Ranh Bay since 1979.

November 14. Putin stated that Russia was "prepared to expand cooperation with NATO and we are prepared to go as far as the Atlantic alliance is prepared to go."

November 14-15. At the summit in Crawford, Texas, Putin and Bush agreed to reduce U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals from around 6,000 weapons to 1,500-2,000.

December 7. NATO and Russia agreed to set up a new decision-making council giving Russia greater say in certain NATO activities. The council replaced the Permanent Joint Council established in 1997.

December 13. While calling the unilateral U.S. decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty a "mistake," Putin told his nation that it did not present a threat to their national security. He went on to say that the "current level of relations" between the two nations "should not only be retained, but also used to work out the new framework of a strategic relationship."

Despite the end of the ABM regime, Putin reiterated Russia's support for "radical, irreversible, and verifiable" reductions in nuclear arsenals and its intent to formalize the agreement reached at Crawford.

September through December. Throughout the fall of 2001, Russia—the largest independent oil exporter, with 7 percent of the world market—resisted demands by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to reduce exports by 100,000-150,000 barrels a day and thus shielded the U.S. and Western European economies from the adverse effects of higher energy costs. Russia's example prompted the other two leading independent exporters, Mexico and Norway, to follow suit.

On November 15, after several weeks of intense pressure by OPEC, Russia promised a symbolic cut of 30,000 barrels per day (or 1 percent of Russia's daily exports). As the market registered the trivial magnitude of this cut, the price of crude oil in New York fell almost 12 percent to $17.45 a barrel, the lowest in more than two years. Eventually Moscow agreed to cut exports by 150,000 barrels in the first quarter of 2002. But even that cut, should it materialize, would represent only 2 percent of total production and would largely reflect increased domestic consumption during the coldest winter months.

To account for this impressive record of sympathy and helpfulness post-September 11, the American media have offered three principal explanations, in various combinations: Russia's behavior (a) amounted to a tactical quid pro quo, (b) was all Russia could do since it "couldn't afford" military expenditures, or (c) reflected the whim of a single leader. The first two of these are easily dismissed.

According to the quid pro quo theory, Moscow was actually pursuing five short-term objectives. It wanted to prevent the United States from withdrawing from the ABM treaty; facilitate Russian entry into the World Trade Organization; prevent or delay the second round of NATO expansion; reschedule and secure partial forgiveness of Soviet-era debt to the lenders of the Paris Club; and mute criticism of alleged Russian human rights abuses in the war in Chechnya.

More than five months later, not one of those alleged goals has been attained. The United States has served notice of its withdrawal from the ABM treaty; no exceptions have been made to WTO membership requirements for Russia; NATO is expected to announce new members at the end of the year; the Paris Club has not softened its position about repayment on schedule; and after a brief lull, U.S. officials are back to criticizing Moscow's Chechnya policy. If Russia was aiming to secure a quid pro quo, it failed totally.

Budgetary pressures have been proffered to explain Moscow's insistence on radical cuts in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals and the abandonment of Lourdes and Cam Ranh Bay. As for the base closings, Russia paid Havana the annual $200 million rent for Lourdes in crude oil and spare parts for obsolete Soviet military equipment—hardly a heavy burden for a country with a nearly $300 billion GDP. It leased Cam Ranh rent free.

Whatever the savings, the economic explanation for Russia's willingness to part with 4,000 nuclear weapons is simply unsound. Nations determine how much to spend on the military not by consulting balance sheets but by examining their national priorities, which are shaped by people's or rulers' passions, such as fear, hatred, or pride. Thus, China, with per capita GDP about half Russia's, maintains the world's largest army (almost three times larger than Russia's) and has increased defense spending by 8-10 percent annually over the past decade. The Soviet Union itself, for that

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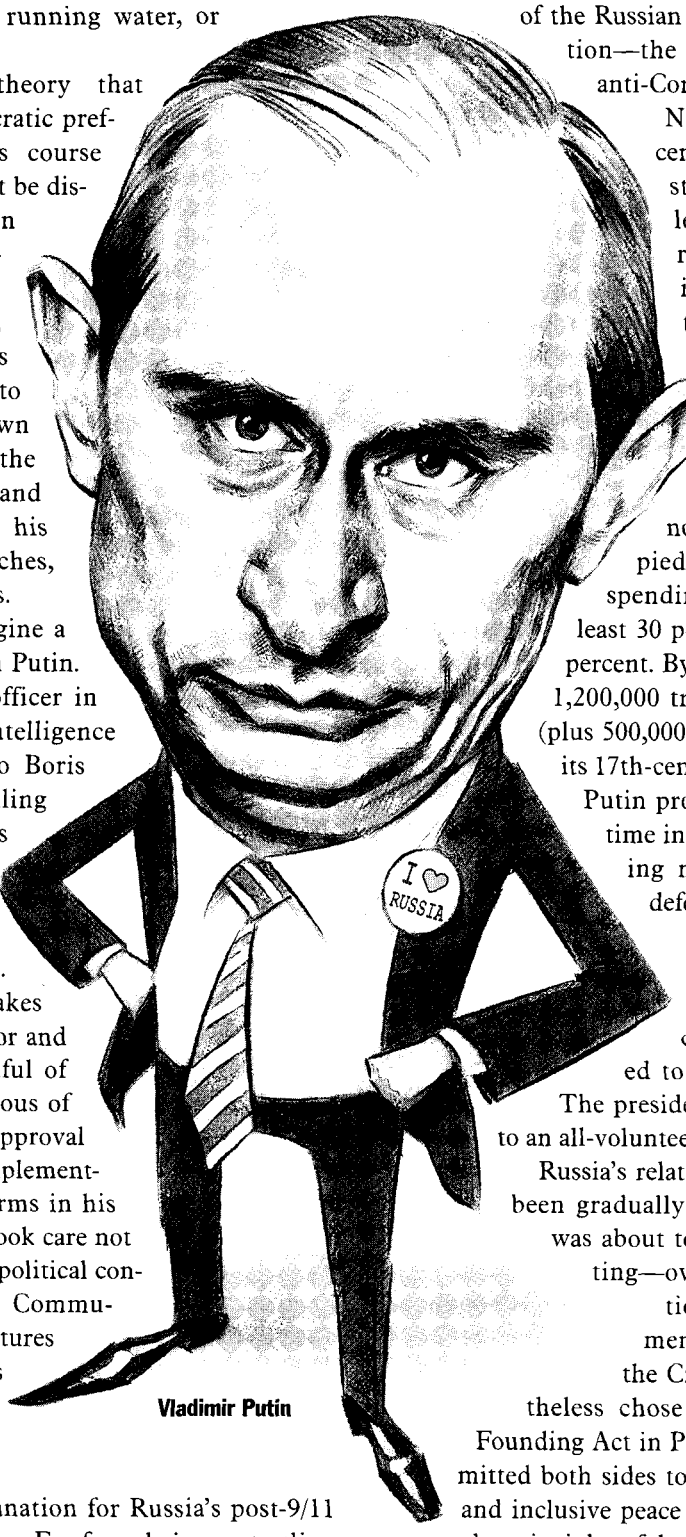
matter, was one of history's most spectacular negations of the policy-by-affordability theory of military expenditures. In a country with 10,000 nuclear warheads and 4 million men under arms, 35 percent of hospital beds were in facilities without hot water, and half of schools had no central heating, running water, or indoor toilets.

By contrast, the theory that Vladimir Putin's idiosyncratic preferences explain Russia's course since September 11 cannot be dismissed out of hand. Putin has clearly made an enormous personal investment in Russia's policies, from his televised address to the American people, to the overruling of his own minister of defense on the use of Russian air space and former Soviet bases, to his highly publicized speeches, statements, and interviews.

Yet it is hard to imagine a leader less impulsive than Putin. A former mid-ranking officer in the Soviet foreign-intelligence bureaucracy, Putin is no Boris Yeltsin, pushing and pulling the nation toward his vision of what is good for Russia, sometimes at enormous political and even personal risk. The cautious Putin takes pride in being a conciliator and consensus-builder. Mindful of public opinion, he is jealous of his astronomical public approval ratings. Until he began implementing major economic reforms in his second year in office, he took care not to alienate any important political constituency, including the Communists. Abrupt policy departures are not in such a man's repertoire.



Vladimir Putin

Illustration by Darren Gygi

Instead, the true explanation for Russia's post-9/11 behavior lies elsewhere. Far from being a startling departure, as the Western press imagined, Putin's response to the war on terrorism was, in fact, fundamentally consistent with the 1990s foreign policy of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin—the man, after all, who handpicked Putin as prime minister and heir apparent. This course in foreign policy, moreover, was itself a product of the Russian nation's new domestic direction—the new course charted by the anti-Communist revolution.

Never in the four and a half centuries of the modern Russian state has there been a Russia less imperialist, less militarized, and less threatening to its neighbors and the world than the one forged in the 1990s. Between 1992 and 1999, Russia abandoned its empire and underwent a demilitarization unprecedented for a country not defeated in a war and occupied by the victors. Defense spending has plummetted from at least 30 percent of GDP to less than 5 percent. By 1995, Russia had repatriated 1,200,000 troops and civilian personnel (plus 500,000 dependents) and returned to its 17th-century borders. Last September Putin proudly noted that for the first time in its history Russia was spending more on education than on defense.

The army Russia inherited from the Soviet Union was 4 million strong; today's active duty force of 1 million is slated to be cut by 350,000 by 2003. The president has approved a transition to an all-volunteer force by 2010.

Russia's relationship with NATO, too, has been gradually transformed. When NATO was about to expand eastward by admitting—over Russia's strenuous objections—former Warsaw Pact members Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, Yeltsin nevertheless chose to sign the NATO-Russia Founding Act in Paris on May 27, 1997. It committed both sides to "building together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy."

Russia's new relationship with the Western powers

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was severely tested in the Balkans. Yet Russia supported the efforts of the United States and its allies to end the 1992-95 war in Bosnia, voted for the U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia, and provided peacekeepers. In 1998 Moscow again joined the economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and voted for the U.N. Security Council resolution demanding the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops from Kosovo.

Though angered by the March 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and against the urging of its own nationalist Left, Russia provided no military or material assistance to Slavic and Orthodox Yugoslavia. After Yeltsin fired his anti-American, pro-Yugoslavia prime minister Yevgeny Primakov and appointed former prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin as his personal envoy for the Kosovo conflict, Moscow became actively involved in ending the Kosovo war. By June, the United States and Russia had agreed on a common negotiating position. After they presented a joint ultimatum to Milosevic on June 3, Yugoslavia agreed to a settlement.

As regards nuclear weapons, Moscow first proposed to the United States a mutual reduction of nuclear arsenals to 1,500 weapons each in August 1999. A year later it adopted a plan for a unilateral radical downsizing of its strategic rocket forces. Putin fired his defense minister and the head of the strategic rocket forces for opposing these reductions.

Yet the roots of Russia's behavior following September 11 go deeper still. If Russia's foreign policy has changed, it is because in the past decade Russia itself has become a changed country.

In politics, Russian voters decisively chose the pro-reform, pro-Western Boris Yeltsin over the anti-Western, nationalist Communist alternative in the 1996 presidential election. They reaffirmed their choice when they snubbed the "popular patriotic" Left in the December 1999 parliamentary election, and again three months later when they gave Vladimir Putin a 53-29 percent victory over Communist Gennadi Zyuganov.

Today, the Duma has a stable pro-reform majority, as reflected in its 268-101 vote of support for the U.S.-led war on terrorism. Not surprisingly, then, 71 percent of Russians surveyed last October approved of close cooperation between Russia and the United States in the fight against international terrorism. A month later only 13 percent of the national sample thought of the United States as their country's enemy—down from 48 percent in 1999.

On the economic front, the revolution Yeltsin led has become irreversible. Since Yeltsin's resignation on New Year's Eve 1999, the fierce battles of the mid-1990s over privatization and economic liberalization have yielded to consensus among the political elite, including the moderate Left, that prosperity and stability can be achieved only through a market economy and participation in the world economic system.

Today, the private sector produces at least 70 percent of Russia's GDP. Despite all-out opposition from the Communists in the Duma as recently as last summer, urban land can now be privately owned, bought, and sold. Taxes on corporate profits were slashed from 35 percent to 24 percent effective January 1, 2002. A new labor code has made it much easier to hire and fire.

Other reforms first outlined by Yeltsin in 1997 that are now politically feasible include the radical restructuring and partial privatization of the pension system, the phasing out of enormous state subsidies for rent and utilities, and the introduction of market competition in the supply of gas, water, and electricity. In the pipeline are banking reforms and the breakup of state monopolies in rail transportation, gas, and electricity.

Finally, improvements in the standard of living, interrupted by the 1998 financial crisis, have resumed. Although the main beneficiaries have been the young, the college-educated, and the urban, millions of Russians have been given hope for a better life. The average income rose 6 percent in 2001, real wages 20 percent, and pensions 23 percent. There were 18 cars per 100 households in 1990; 42 in 2001. The produce shortages and ubiquitous lines of the Soviet era have been forgotten. Fresh and delicious food is available everywhere. For the first time since the late 1920s, Russia not only feeds its people and livestock but is a net exporter of grain.

In the past two years the number of Internet users has grown 40 percent to almost one in six Russian households. Because of the profusion of private institutions of higher education, there were 75 percent more colleges in Russia and 50 percent more students in 2000 than in 1992. Overwhelmingly private-sector, the post-Soviet middle class has proved resilient. It has grown from near zero in 1991 to between one-fourth and one-third of the Russian population.

In dealing with both the vociferous anti-Western Left and the Cold War defense and foreign-affairs bureaucracies, Putin's hand has been strengthened by economic growth of 4 percent in 1999, 8 percent in 2000, and 5-6 percent in 2001. Introduced on January 1, 2001, the 13 percent flat tax on personal income—Putin called it "revolutionary" and the "lowest in Europe"—boosted collection of personal income taxes by 30 percent in the first half of 2001.

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Newsmakers

A Moscow polling station: Democracy has taken hold.

Meeting with American journalists on the eve of his departure for the Crawford summit last November, President Putin pointed to the domestic sources of Russia's post-September 11 policies:

> If anyone thinks that Russia can again become an enemy of the United States, those people do not understand what has happened in Russia, what country it has become. What the Russian leadership is doing today is dictated not only by the political philosophy of Russian leaders. Russia's actions are dictated by its domestic situation and public opinion. And the most important is that an overwhelming majority of the Russian population want to live [in a country with] effectively functioning democratic institutions. An overwhelming majority of the Russian population want to live [in a country with a] social market economy, want to feel themselves and their country to be an integral part of modern civilization. . . . People want freely to move around the world, to use to the fullest all the advantages offered by normal democratic society.

The Cold War, in other words, is never coming back. The Russian public will not allow it. To be sure, U.S.-Russian relations will have their ups and downs. Among the tests ahead are a greater role for Russia in pan-European security and decision-making as NATO expands, human rights in Chechnya, censorship of the electronic media in Russia, Moscow's selective prosecution of environmental activists and scholars for contacts with the foreign press, and—most urgent of all—the challenges associated with nuclear arms reductions and the "axis of evil."

In the post-ABM world, the diplomats will have to reconcile Russia's desire for minutely negotiated deep cuts in nuclear arsenals with the Bush administration's preference for informal agreements and its plan to store rather than destroy the dismantled warheads.

Washington's policies toward the "axis of evil," meanwhile, are bound to impinge on Russia as a regional power. Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are all within Russia's centuries-old sphere of influence. Moscow wants to play a role, in particular, in the pending review and restructuring of U.N. sanctions against Iraq and in pressuring Baghdad to readmit weapons inspectors.

In addition, Russia is Iraq's largest trading partner, supplying Baghdad with $700 million in goods under the U.N.-mandated oil-for-food program. Iraq owes an estimated $8 billion to the Soviet Union and Russia, and Moscow wants to make sure that debt is honored by any post-Saddam government. The Kremlin is also under pressure from Russian oil companies to protect their lucrative contracts with Baghdad.

Iran, similarly, is Russia's third-largest arms customer (after China and India). An agreement signed last year could bring Moscow $300 million in annual sales to Iran for several years—a hefty sum for a starved military-industrial complex. In addition to conventional weapons, Russia exports missile and nuclear technology to Iran. Long an irritant in U.S.-Russian relations, these transfers are viewed with greater concern than ever by the White House.

Yet even these pending issues in U.S.-Russian relations, serious though they are, are essentially short-term—whereas Russia's post-September 11 behavior indicates a profound shift in national priorities, the fruit of a revolutionary decade. There are good reasons to believe that Russia's gradual reorientation toward the West over the course of the 1990s reached a point of no return in the autumn of 2001. At the very least, September 11 made it unmistakably plain that Russia, in its great journey forward, is fast approaching what Lord Byron in *Don Juan* called the "post-house, where the Fates / Change horses, making history change its tune." ♦

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The False Promise of 'Therapeutic' Cloning

Moral considerations aside, human cloning is not going to lead to useful medical treatments.

By Wesley J. Smith

The Senate will shortly take up one of the most pressing moral, ethical, and scientific issues of our time: the Brownback proposal to outlaw human cloning. Two alternative proposals would ban only "reproductive cloning," which would mean explicitly legalizing human cloning but not the implantation of a clone embryo into a womb. Pro-cloners are willing for the most part to outlaw reproductive cloning (for now) because it isn't safe and it gives the appearance of a reasonable compromise. But they oppose a ban on cloning for research and experimentation—euphemistically known as "therapeutic cloning"—arguing that such a cloning license is necessary to the development of future medical treatments for terrible human ailments.

The case against cloning, including therapeutic cloning, has mainly been argued on grounds of morality. Opponents have warned that creating embryos through cloning for the purpose of research (with the full intention of destroying them later) is a breathtakingly radical enterprise. For the first time in history, human lives will be created for the explicit purpose of exploitation. Such considerations have led activist Jeremy Rifkin to opine that the cloning debate is to the 21st century what the slavery debate was to the 19th.

Unfortunately, we live in a time of widespread and extreme non-judgmentalism, an era when many Americans simply do not respond to moral arguments in public policy debates. For these folk, what counts is not right versus wrong, but whether it will or won't work—in a word, utility.

Does this mean that the public policy amoralists among us must end up by default on the pro-cloning side? Not at all. There is increasing evidence that therapies based on cloned embryo cells would be so difficult and expensive to develop and so utterly impractical to bring to the bedside, that the pie-in-the-sky promises which fuel the pro-cloning side of the debate are unlikely to materialize. Not only is human cloning immoral but it may have negative utility—in other words, attempting to develop human cloning technologies for therapeutic use may drain resources and personnel from more useful and practical therapies.

To understand why therapeutic cloning fails the utility test, we must take a quick look at the significant difficulties facing embryonic stem cell research. Embryonic stem cell researchers hope to create medical treatments that would use undifferentiated cells—known generically as stem cells—extracted from 5-to-7-day-old embryos known as blastocysts. During natural gestation, these stem cells eventually "differentiate," that is, they transform into bone, neurons, muscle, organs, blood—indeed, all of the more than 200 different tissue types in the body. Researchers hope to learn how to harness this ability by extracting stem cells from embryos, transforming them into specific tissues, and then injecting the tissues into patients to treat medical ailments.

In their enthusiasm for embryonic stem cells—and in an effort to assure ample funding for the research—some advocates have all but promised that such therapies are just around the corner. But that isn't even close to being true.

Writing in the scientific research journal *Stem Cells*, editor in chief (and advocate of embryonic stem cell research) Curt I. Civin admitted that "scientists have exaggerated the immediacy of the prospects of clinical therapies using stem cells." Moreover, Civin believes that "clinical application" of stem cell therapies is actually "a long way off." Why? Primarily two reasons: First, embryonic cells may cause tumors in patients; and, second, the

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body may reject embryonic tissues in the same way the immune system rejects transplanted organs.

A recent experiment involving rats, reported in the January 8, 2002, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, illustrates the tumor problem. Researchers at Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital in Belmont, Massachusetts, injected mouse embryonic stem cells into rats to relieve Parkinson's disease-like symptoms. Of the 25 rats receiving the embryonic stem cells, 14 showed modest improvement, 6 showed no benefit, and 5 died of brain tumors caused by the stem cells. In other words, the therapy actually killed 20 percent of the recipients of the embryonic stem cell therapy. And this occurred even though researchers tried mightily to prevent tumor formation by injecting only 1 percent of the number of such cells that have been used in other experiments that led to tumor deaths. It is becoming clear that overcoming the problem of tumor formation—if it can be done—will be a very difficult, time-consuming, and expensive undertaking.

Contrast that decidedly mixed result with a similar but far more successful experiment involving adult stem cells in rats reported by the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, December 19, 2000. Researchers at the University of California, Irvine, reported that they were able to stimulate the growth of (adult) neural stem cells in rats suffering from Parkinson's-like symptoms. These cells then migrated to the damaged area of the brain and differentiated into the types of neurons needed to replace the missing/damaged brain cells. An encouraging 80 percent of the rats in the experiment—more than in the experiment using embryonic cells—received therapeutic benefit. Moreover, *none* developed tumors. The experiment was so successful the scientists reported that their research presented "significant implications with respect to the development of treatments" for both brain injuries and degenerative diseases. They further predicted that their approach could offer "an alternative strategy" to using embryonic cells to treat such ailments.

Tissue rejection presents nearly as high a hurdle to surmount. Unless researchers find a way to prevent the body's immune system from attacking embryonic cells as "foreign," patients receiving embryonic stem cell therapies will require a lifetime regimen of strong drugs to suppress their immune systems. These medications often produce serious side effects such as problems with wound healing, a propensity to suffer opportunistic infections, skin malignancies, and drug-related toxicities.

Researchers have endeavored mightily to solve the problem of tissue rejection, so far without success. One seemingly promising approach—removing from the cells the molecules that stimulate rejection—did not prevent rejection in animal skin graft experiments. So now, back at their drawing boards, researchers contemplate inserting desired genes into the embryonic stem cells to fool the body into thinking that the injected cells are its own. Whether this can be done is not known, but learning how to manipulate embryonic stem cells genetically to thwart rejection is clearly a problem that is also going to take a very long time to overcome—assuming that it can be solved at all.

The tissue rejection conundrum brings us back to human therapeutic cloning. Cloning advocates argue that they must be allowed to legally clone human embryos in order to overcome the rejection problem described above. This is how the process of therapeutic cloning would work: A patient requiring embryonic stem cell therapy would donate his own genetic material, say from a skin biopsy, which would then be used to clone an embryonic identical twin of the patient. The clone embryo would be developed to the blastocyst stage and then destroyed and harvested for the stem cells. The harvested stem cells would then be transformed into the type of tissue required for the patient's treatment. Researchers expect that the clone's virtually identical genetic makeup would fool the patient's immune system into perceiving the injected tissues as "self," thereby overcoming the rejection problem.

That is the theory, and it has been swallowed hook, line, and sinker by many in the media, government, and patient advocacy groups. But a close look at the realities of this scenario shows that it is smoke and mirrors. Even *if* scientists are ever able to develop a human clone to the blastocyst stage (not a given), and *if* these clones are not genetically defective (most mammalian clones created to date have had serious genetic anomalies), human cloning will *still* not be able to help the millions of patients who desperately hope to benefit from clone stem cell therapy.

Here's why: Cloning involves something called nuclear cell transfer. In humans, this is accomplished by removing the nucleus from a human ovum and replacing it with genetic material removed from a cell of the clone donor. The genetically modified egg is then stimulated with an electric current. If it works, a new human organism that is virtually identical to the clone donor comes into being and begins embryonic growth.

There are two absolutely essential ingredients to successful nuclear cell transfer cloning. One is a somatic cell from the clone donor. No problem there. The other is the egg. And here is where therapeutic cloning hits a brick wall: We can only create as many patient clones for therapeutic use as there are eggs available. Thus the entire util-

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ity argument over therapeutic cloning boils down to one crucial and unavoidable question: *Where are we going to get the eggs we would need to treat the millions of patients who would supposedly benefit from clone embryonic stem cell therapy?*

The simple answer is: We aren't going to get them. Assuming that therapeutic cloning researchers could overcome the genetic defects problem, and assuming that they could also control the growth of the new cells so as to prevent tumors, and even assuming perfect clinical conditions, there is no way around the fact that at least one human egg would be required for each patient. Now, consider the number of patients in this country alone with medical conditions for which embryonic stem cell therapies are being promoted as promising—people with Parkinson's disease, stroke, Lou Gehrig's disease, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, Huntington's disease, and more. According to a National Academy of Sciences estimate, there are more than *100 million* such patients in the United States alone, meaning that even in a perfect cloning world, we would need *at least 100 million human eggs* to treat them. The only possible way out would be to use cow eggs. But few researchers speak publicly of wanting to go there.

And that isn't the half of it. As daunting as that number is, for the foreseeable future it will take many eggs to successfully create just one clone embryo. This means that the actual number of eggs that would be necessary for clinical application of therapeutic cell cloning is some unknown multiple of the figure above—an utterly staggering number.

David Prentice, an expert in stem cell research at Indiana State University and an opponent of human cloning, has done the math for just one patient group: diabetics. The results are devastating to the prospect of ever seeing therapeutic cloning take pride of place in medicine's armamentarium. There are some 16 million diabetics in the United States. Prentice assumed that 20 percent of cloning attempts would succeed in reaching the blastocyst stage of development. This number is based on published reports on successful production of blastocysts from animal cloning. The number is more than fair since cloning a genetically sound human embryo would be more difficult than cloning an embryonic mouse, sheep, or cat.

He next assumed that stem cells would be successfully derived from 10 percent of these clone embryos. This figure is also fair. It took 36 embryos for James Thomson of the University of Wisconsin to create 5 human embryonic stem cell lines, a 13.8 percent success rate. The Jones Institute used 110 embryos to get only three stem cell lines, a 2.7 percent success rate. And these embryos were created through fertilization, which does not pose the genetic defect problem found in clone embryos.

Using these figures, Prentice computed that it would take 800 million eggs just to treat the 16 million American diabetics with a therapy involving cloned embryonic stem cells.

Obtaining human eggs for this purpose would involve stimulating the ovaries to hyper-ovulate, which generally produces 7-10 eggs. Assuming a liberal 10 eggs harvested from each procedure, 80 million women of childbearing age would be needed as donors.

Considering the number of people in the United States with other diseases who have been promised they will benefit from therapeutic cloning, the actual number of women that would be required to donate eggs just to treat patients in this country can hardly be imagined.

Now, consider the difficulties involved with hyper-ovulation. The procedure is not exactly a walk in the park. After the ovaries are stimulated to release multiple eggs, the eggs are surgically extracted. A partial list of potential side effects from the procedure include rupture of the ovaries, severe pelvic pain, accumulation of fluid in the abdomen as well as around the heart and lungs, bleeding into the abdominal cavity, acute respiratory distress, and pulmonary embolism. That being so, how many American women are going to be willing to provide eggs for use in cloning?

Of course there are billions of women in the developing world who could provide eggs. But that would require creating a market in human ova in which poor women would submit to hyper-ovulation for pay without any personal therapeutic benefit. And even assuming a thriving market in eggs, the number that could realistically be obtained would not even scratch the surface of the actual therapeutic need.

The "egg dearth" is a mathematical certainty. This means that if clone embryonic stem cell therapy were ever successfully developed, it would have to be either severely rationed or available only to the very rich. But therapeutic cloning is being held out as a panacea for the many, not as a rare procedure available to the very few. That's a false hope. The real "promise" of therapeutic cloning is this: millions of Third World women being paid to submit to operations for the benefit of rich Americans.

Researchers already realize that therapeutic cloning will not be a generally available medical treatment, although they don't speak about it too loudly for fear of aiding the anti-cloning effort. Still, some cloning advocates rise to the level of public candor. For example, a year ago biotech researchers Jon S. Odorico, Dan S. Kaufman, and James A. Thomson admitted the following in the research journal *Stem Cells*:

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> The poor availability of human ococytes [eggs], the low efficiency of the nuclear cell procedure, and the long population-doubling time of human ES cells make it difficult to envision this [therapeutic cloning to obtain stem cells] becoming a routine clinical procedure even if ethical considerations were not a significant point of contention.

Other researchers have made the same point privately. Peter Aldhous, *Nature*'s chief news and features editor and a man with a reputation for giving the straight story, reported in the December 20/27, 2001, edition of *Nature*, "the idea of 'therapeutic cloning' seems to be on the wane. By creating cloned human blastocysts, some experts have argued that it should be possible to derive ES cells perfectly matched to individual patients. But most now believe this will be too expensive and cumbersome for regular clinical use." Or to put it another way, there just aren't enough human eggs.

Be that as it may, some readers might be thinking, why not go forward with research into human cloning anyway? The answer to that question brings us back to the issue of utility. If our goal as a society is to fund research into cellular technologies with the best hope of providing viable medical therapies in the shortest period of time, human cloning is the last thing we want to fund. After all, medical research dollars are a finite resource, and research into human cloning is very expensive. (It took $3.7 million just to clone one cat.) Thus, money poured into human cloning is money that will not be available for other areas of medical research.

Moreover, when it comes to the issue of stem cell therapies, the evidence is becoming overwhelming that our limited resources are most wisely spent pursuing research into adult stem cells as our best and quickest hope for developing efficacious new medical treatments. Adult cells don't appear to lead to tumors. And since the patient's own cells are used, tissue rejection is not an issue. Moreover, adult stem cells are already used to treat human ailments such as heart disease and auto immune deficiencies—which even the most optimistic proponents of therapeutic cloning admit are many years away using embryonic stem cells. In this regard, it is worth noting that the American Red Cross recently *refused* a National Institutes of Health grant to work on embryonic stem cells in order to focus more intensely on research involving stem cells found in umbilical cord blood. Why concentrate on umbilical cord blood and exclude work on embryos? The Red Cross representative could not have been clearer: "We really need to focus our resources, our attention, on those areas where we could most likely provide, in the shortest period of time, some therapies for our patients."

To pour money into human cloning embryonic stem cell research is to risk drilling one dry hole after another. The moral policy thus also turns out to be the pragmatic one. The United States Senate should vote to ban all human cloning now. ♦

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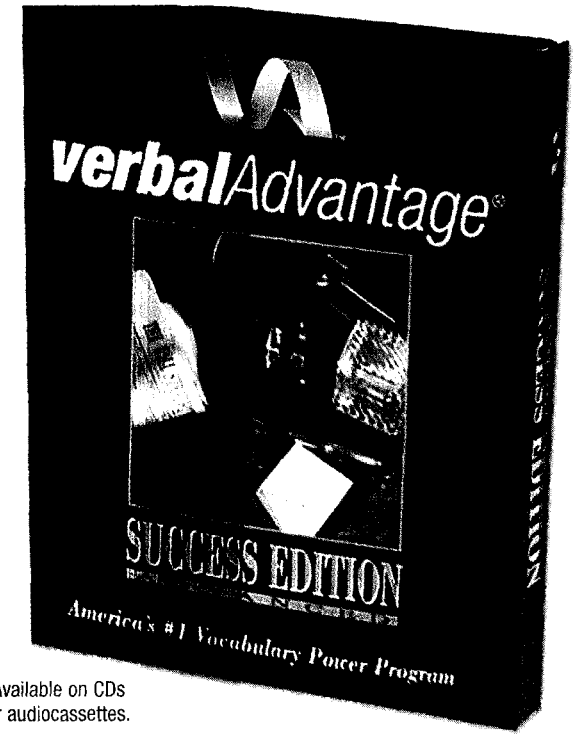

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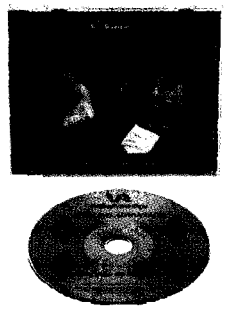

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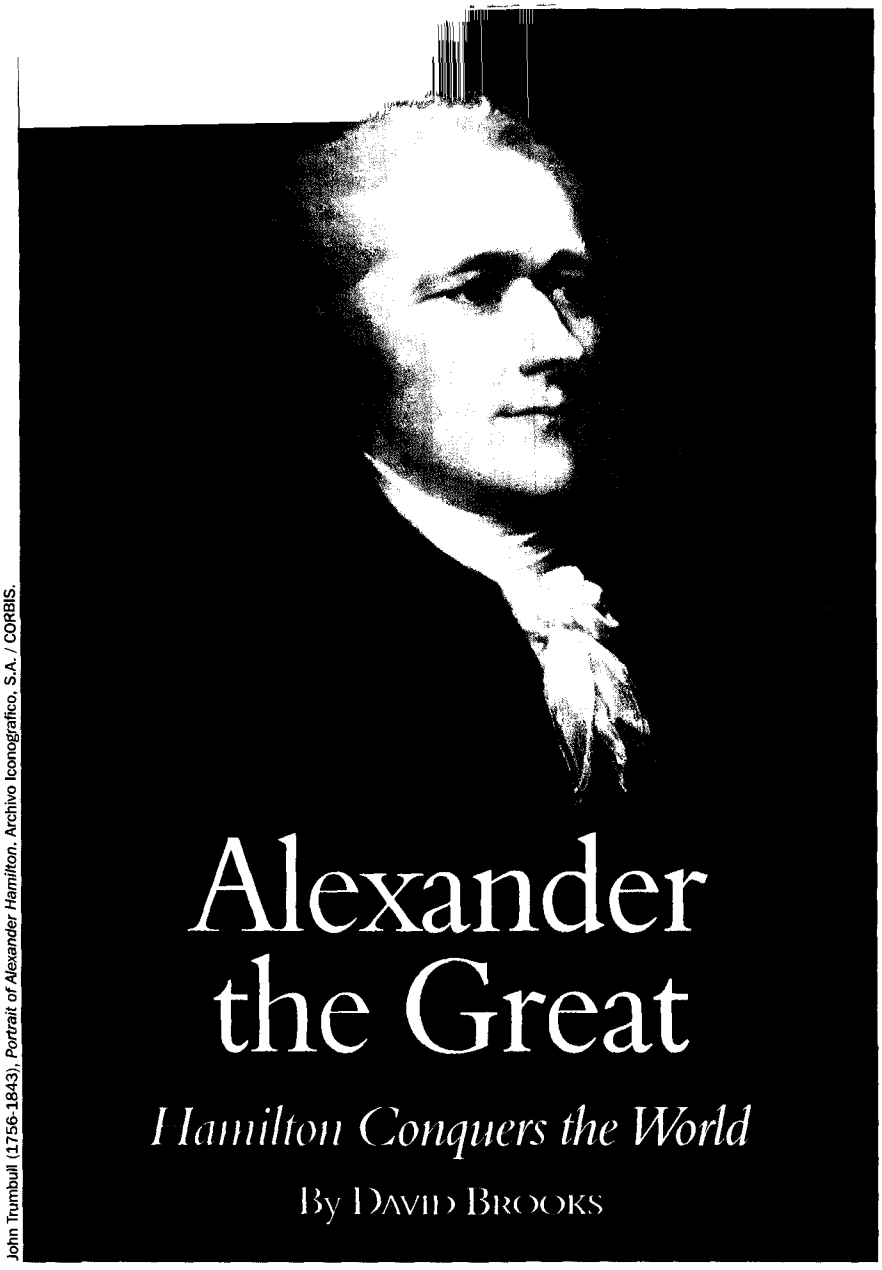

John Trumbull (1756-1843), *Portrait of Alexander Hamilton*. Archivo Iconografico, S.A. / CORBIS.

Alexander the Great

Hamilton Conquers the World

By David Brooks

In 1987, the Yale historian Paul Kennedy published a book called *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* in which he warned that the United States was on the verge of decline. The problem he said was "imperial overstretch." America had taken on more overseas commitments than it could afford and was slowly sinking under the burden.

It hasn't worked out that way. But Kennedy is an honest scholar, and on February 2, 2002, he took another look at his subject in an essay in the *Financial Times*. He began with a long description of a United States aircraft-carrier battle group: the twenty-story carrier, with a crew of over five thousand, along with seventy state-of-the-art aircraft armed with the latest smart-bomb and missile technology. No other nation has a weapon this formidable. But it does not move alone. The carrier is accompanied by an Aegis cruiser and a small convoy of other ships—including a hunter-killer submarine or two to attack enemy subs. The United States will have thirteen carrier groups like this when the USS *Ronald Reagan* joins the fleet soon. "This array of force is staggering," Kennedy wrote. "Were it ever assembled en masse the result would be the largest concentration of naval and aerial force the world would have seen."

David Brooks is a senior editor at The Weekly Standard.

Alexander Hamilton & the Persistence of Myth
by Stephen F. Knott
University Press of Kansas, 344 pp., $34.95

Writings
by Alexander Hamilton
edited by Joanne B. Freeman
Library of America, 1,108 pp., $40

But, Kennedy pointed out, it never is assembled en masse. Instead, the United States' forces are spread around the globe, protecting American interests and projecting American power to every corner of the world. The United States now spends more on its military than the next nine largest national defense budgets combined, Kennedy noted. The United States is responsible for 40 percent of global defense spending, if not more. "Nothing has ever existed like this disparity of power; nothing," Kennedy added. Looking back over the course of human history, he concluded that no other superpower has ever had such an advantage over its allies and rivals.

But this time, Kennedy was not warning of imperial overstretch, because the *economic* might of America is easily capable of supporting its military outlays. The United States accounts for nearly 30 percent of world economic production, Kennedy estimated. In other words, the American economy now comprises roughly the same share of the total world economy as it did in the years after World War II, when Japan and much of Europe were in ruins. So the United States can support this massive military while spending only about 3 percent of its gross national product on defense. "Being Number One at great cost is one thing; being the world's single superpower on the cheap is astonishing," Kennedy noted.

There are other ways to suggest America's dominance. Forty-five percent of all Internet traffic takes place in the United States. About three quarters of the Nobel laureates in the sciences, economics, and medicine in recent decades live and work in the United States. American financial markets account for well over half of the world's

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stock-market capitalization. (The markets of Japan, the nation in second place, account for less than 10 percent.)

In short we live in a unipolar moment the likes of which the world has never seen. This economic and military disparity between the United States and the rest of the world is the great fact of our public lives, and prompts the great questions that will roil them in the years ahead: How can the United States take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity? Does a nation founded in the name of liberty have anything to fear from its own concentrated power? How will other nations react to America's prominence and might? What will be the effects of American economic and cultural dominance?

Fortunately, these questions are not new to us. We have been debating them for over two hundred years—because, two centuries ago, Alexander Hamilton foresaw that the United States would become a great republican empire. He worked all his life to make it so. In many respects the United States that bestrides the world today is Hamiltonianism in action. And the arguments that Alexander Hamilton set off in his lifetime—particularly with Thomas Jefferson—are the same arguments that the United States now sets off today. As befits a hegemon, America not only exports its values; it exports its disagreements. The whole world is about to experience an updated and earth-shaking version of the debate between Hamilton and Jefferson.

Like so many leading Americans, Hamilton was future-minded—which is to say, he viewed the present from the vantage point of the future. While writing the *Federalist Papers*, he saw around him not thirteen struggling states but an empire, "in many respects the most interesting in the world," which would be, before long, stronger than all the great empires of the day, "able to dictate the terms of the connection between the old and the new world!" Hamilton sometimes feared that his grand visions would be taken as the "reveries of a projector rather than the sober views of a politician." But his periods of self-doubt were always brief, and he sought to transform America into a megapower: a nation democratic and free but also ambitious, dynamic, and glorious.

As Forrest McDonald describes it in his definitive *Alexander Hamilton: A Biography*, Hamilton felt his young country was burdened with a social system that bred inertia. Status was derived by birthright. At Harvard, students were listed by the prominence of their families, not in alphabetical order. Meanwhile, outside of a few bustling seaports, local economies were dominated by petty aristocracies and vested interests. There was no real national economy to create competition, heighten trade, and upset local oligarchs.

There is no Founding Father whose reputation has waxed and waned so dramatically, who has aroused so much hatred and contempt.

So Hamilton sought to create a fluid marketplace, one that would allow thrusting meritocrats, such as himself, to rise and make full use of their talents. These concepts were novel in the late eighteenth century, but he realized that in the future technological innovation would be the key to economic growth, and economic growth would be the route to national honor and greatness. If America wanted to achieve her just fame, then the country had to be aroused, and infused with an arduous spirit.

Hamilton's "Report on Manufactures" makes for pretty stale reading today. But, as Boston University's Liah Greenfeld points out in her recent book *The Spirit of Capitalism*, he was far ahead of his time. The prevailing contemporary view, she writes, was that "manufacturing, of all industries, was the least productive of wealth, in fact, unproductive, and that a country with abundant agricultural resources had no need of it." Manufacturing, as Jefferson put it, would be ruinous to a nation's character. It would breed the sort of traders who performed "tricks with paper," and it would create a nation populated by "starved and rickety paupers and dwarfs." If there had to be manufacturing in the world, Jefferson said, let the workshops remain in Europe.

Hamilton countered that only a diverse economy could open up opportunities for a nation of fully developed human beings. "To cherish and stimulate the activity of the human mind, by multiplying the object of enterprise," he wrote in the Report, "is not the least considerable of the experiments by which wealth of a nation may be promoted. . . . Every new scene, which is opened to the busy nature of man to rouse and exert itself, is the addition of a new energy to the general stock of effort."

Hamilton therefore nationalized the nation's revolutionary war debt, which he hoped would not only forge the many local economies into a great national economy, it would lead to thriving credit markets, which could fund investments and innovations. He created the Bank of the United States. He supported tariffs for infant industries (and advocated the removal of tariffs once industries could stand on their own). He organized what we would now call federal research and development programs. He pioneered new forms of socio-economic research. He believed that only a limited but energetic government could rip off the shackles that inhibited the energies of the nation. While some of his peers, particularly James Madison, feared human passions and sought to check them, Hamilton feared human passions and sought to channel them for the good of the nation.

Hamilton was largely indifferent to his own finances. Like his admirer Theodore Roosevelt, he was motivated more by the desire for honor, and he

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saw national wealth as a means to secure American power and prestige. He also fervently believed that economic might should be accompanied by military independence. He supported a professional standing army against the Jeffersonians who believed the United States should rely on militias for defense. He tried to create a military academy and insisted that a global commercial power required a large and well-funded navy. He proposed a million-dollar fund for a United States intelligence agency.

What he was seeking in this was to create a spirit of patriotism that would motivate Americans to look for opportunities beyond the comfort of their valleys and homes. He hoped effective government would stoke Americans' confidence in their own abilities and rouse them to great things. Create, motivate, stoke, rouse—these are all Hamiltonian words. And in this way Hamilton did play some role in fomenting the enormous energy that is the main feature visitors cite when trying to summarize the American spirit.

And this energy was not only to be devoted to glory and enrichment, it was also to be channeled in the name of a great cause: democratic government. "Hamilton spent most of his career trying to reconcile the necessity of empire with the moral authority of consent," Karl-Friedrich Walling writes in his excellent 1999 book *Republican Empire: Alexander Hamilton on War and Free Government*. He hoped American liberty would prompt a global democratic revolution:

> The world has its eyes on America. The noble struggle we have made in the cause of liberty, has occasioned a kind of revolution in human sentiment. The influence of our example has penetrated the gloomy regions of despotism, and has pointed the way to inquiries, which may shake it to its deepest foundations.

In sum, Hamilton dreamed that America would become a rich, powerful republican empire that would champion the idea of self-government around the world. And of all the different Americas that could have been imagined more than two hundred years ago, this one has come to pass. As George Will once put it, "There is an elegant memorial in Washington to Jefferson, but none to Hamilton. However, if you seek Hamilton's monument, look around. You are living in it. We honor Jefferson, but live in Hamilton's country."

All remaining illustrations: Hulton / Archive.

A rendering of Chappel's portrait of Hamilton during the Revolutionary War.

And yet there is no Founding Father whose reputation has waxed and waned so dramatically, who has aroused so much hatred and contempt. In his invaluable new book, *Alexander Hamilton & the Persistence of Myth*, Stephen Knott, an assistant professor and research fellow at the Miller Center at the University of Virginia, traces the course of Hamilton's reputation. At his death, Hamilton was lavishly mourned, but he had the misfortune to be survived, by many years, by his two great enemies: Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Indeed, it was Adams who had called Hamilton the "bastard brat of a Scotch peddler" and continued to inveigh against him during the early years of the nineteenth century.

Hamilton's reputation fell during Andrew Jackson's administration—but then began to recover with the rising fortunes of self-professed Hamiltonians such as Daniel Webster and de facto Hamiltonians such as Henry Clay (who was reluctant to cite Hamilton personally, for fear of giving ammunition to his own enemies). Hamilton's prestige reached its zenith during the Civil War. A strong abolitionist, he had spent his life preaching the virtues of national union and warning about the calamities of disunion—which meant that in the north he was regarded as a demigod, just below Washington among the Founders. (His prestige was so high even Jefferson Davis cited convenient passages from his writings.)

Reverence for Hamilton survived into the Gilded Age, when he was

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adopted by Western industrialists as the patron saint of capitalism and industrial might. Businessmen set up "Hamilton Clubs" across the country, which sponsored addresses on patriotic and commercial themes. Theodore Roosevelt, a fervent Hamiltonian, gave his famous "Strenuous Life" speech at a Hamilton Club in Chicago.

By the 1920s, however, Hamilton's reputation was again the subject of fierce debate. Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge regarded him as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of the Founding Fathers. One of Harding's most popular stock speeches was called "Alexander Hamilton—Prophet of the American Destiny." Coolidge declared, "When America ceases to remember his greatness, America will no longer be great." But left-wing historians such as Charles A. Beard were beginning to chip away at his reputation. And in 1928 Hamilton actually became an issue in the presidential campaign. His virtues were touted at the Republican convention, while at the Democratic convention the keynote speaker branded him an enemy of democracy.

With the coming of the New Deal, Hamilton's reputation hit its nadir. Franklin Roosevelt considered himself a Jeffersonian man of the people—that is to say, an aristocrat with the common touch. Henry Wallace attacked Hamilton as a ruthless plutocrat. I.F. Stone called him "the hero of the upper classes." The New Deal historians, eager to show that all of American history was but a precursor to Roosevelt's domestic program, buried Hamilton under a mountain of obloquy, and Ezra Pound, for what it is worth, called Hamilton "the prime snot in ALL American history" in the *Cantos*.

Hamilton's reputation ticked back upward during the 1950s, when Cold Warriors began citing him as a realistic proponent of American might. But in *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Barry Goldwater declared himself a Jeffersonian, foreshadowing a shift in Republican attitudes. In 1979, Forrest McDonald published his biography, reviving Hamilton's reputation among historians and political theorists. (Ironically, McDonald was chairman of the Goldwater for President Committee in Rhode Island in 1964.) But Hamilton had few champions in the political world. The left—a 1987 PBS documentary was typical—continued to attack him as an apologist for the wealthy. The 1994 Republican revolutionaries—led by Dick Armey and Tom DeLay—considered themselves populist Jeffersonians. "Hamilton's views are anachronistic to our views," said Senator Phil Gramm. "We are Jeffersonians." Congressman David McIntosh, a member of the class of 1994, declared, "We have to be the party of less government, Jeffersonian, not Hamiltonian." The Republican vogue for term limits was a reform inspired by the Jeffersonian spirit.

Stephen Knott does a marvelous job gathering all the different views of Hamilton that have surfaced over the past centuries and weaving them into a clear and interesting narrative. If there is one flaw in the book, it is that Knott doesn't spend enough time analyzing why Hamilton has aroused such passionate responses or what psychological predilections bias an individual into being for Hamilton or against him. With one sentence, though, he does point to the core of the matter: "The manner in which thoughtful Americans react to Alexander Hamilton often reveals their sense of pride or guilt in America's economic and military power as well as their attitude toward their own prosperity." In other words, people who are comfortable with American might and wealth tend to admire Hamilton. Those who are nervous about the American colossus tend to suspect or revile him.

Knott doesn't theorize much further than that, but any reader will be able to detect a pattern. Hamilton struck two notes in particular that aroused passionate antipathies in his lifetime—and have ever since. First, he was an ambitious meritocrat, and second he believed in limited but concentrated power to rouse the populace and shape the future.

A hard-working achiever himself, Hamilton felt honor should go to those who rose through achievement. Some of his rivals viewed him as a dangerous young man in a hurry, a low-born *arriviste* lacking spiritual refinement (hence Jefferson's famous aside predicting that history would scarcely "stoop to notice him").

Those who have a high intolerance for obvious ambition tend to detest Hamilton and the sort of nation he tried to create. "I dislike Hamilton because I always feel the adventurer in him," Henry Adams once remarked. Some of this visceral dislike is pure snobbery, of the sort the languid well-born always feel for obscure strivers. But among the more serious-minded, Hamilton stands for a set of commercial, materialist, and individualistic values that corrode happy community

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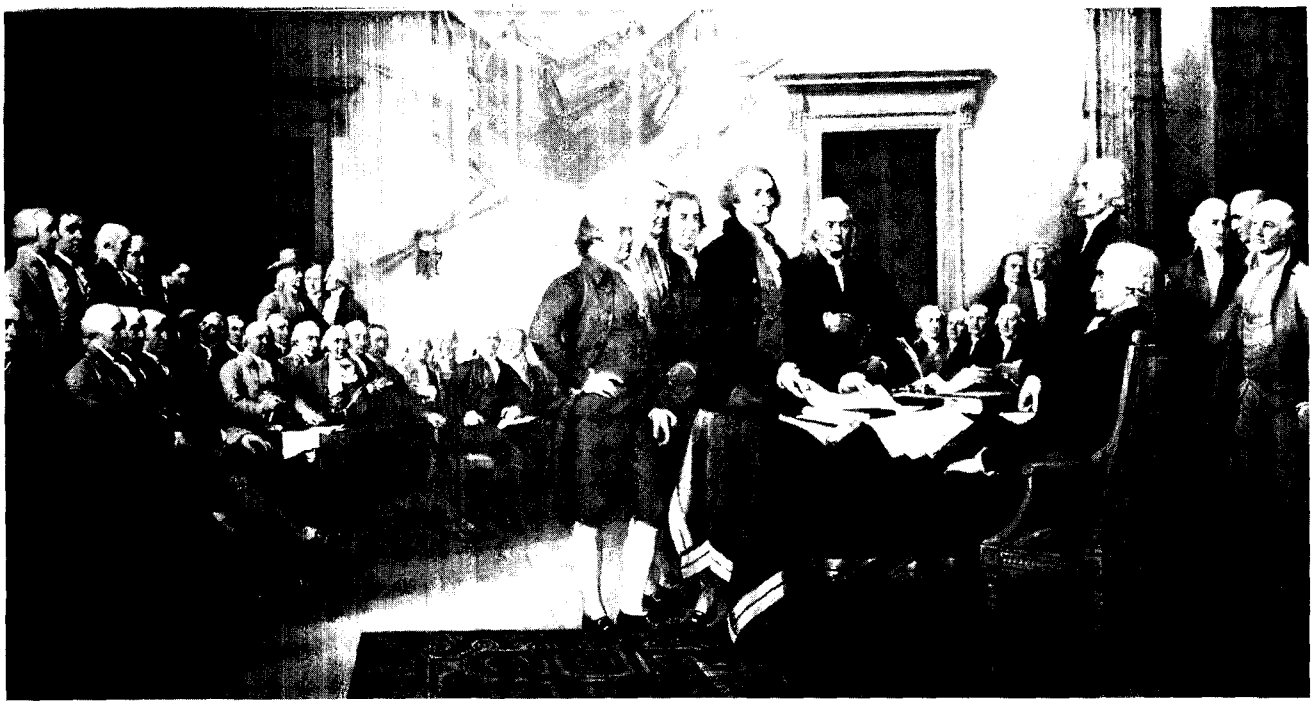

Above: Trumbull's The Signing of the Declaration of Independence. *Opposite: Chappel's picture of Hamilton, 1790.*

or social solidarity. Communitarians and socialists have never had much use for him. Eugene V. Debs attacked him as a "rank individualist." Henry Wallace called him a "commercialist."

Being a meritocrat, Hamilton also believed that those with ability should be able to rise above the common ranks of their fellow citizens. For this, many of Hamilton's critics, especially on the left, have labeled him an elitist. It's interesting that sometimes the same people who call him an adventurer also charge him with being a royalist. These are the three prongs of the trident with which a meritocrat gets jabbed: He is attacked for the low station whence he came; he is attacked for the fervor with which he climbs; and then he is attacked for the heights to which he ascends.

During the middle third of the twentieth century in particular, liberals tarred Hamilton as an enemy of democracy, while embracing Jefferson, the slave-holding aristocrat, as the emblem of all democratic virtues. Hamilton's real flaw, for these people, was that he admired commerce and economic dynamism. Through a series of twisted and unexamined prejudices, the mid-century liberals assumed that anybody who admired commerce must necessarily admire the wealthy. Anybody who admired the wealthy must detest the common man in what was assumed to be the great class war of life. And anybody who detested the common man was not a true democrat. Adlai Stevenson argued that while Jefferson had faith in "all the people," Hamilton "felt that only men of wealth and affairs were qualified to understand and conduct government." *Newsweek* claimed that Hamilton "favored a ruling aristocracy of wealth." James MacGregor Burns claimed that Hamilton "looked on the mass of people as grasping, ignorant, slavish, in short, incapable of self-government."

One of the best threads in Stephen Knott's book concerns a quotation, often attributed to Hamilton, that the people are "a great beast." This comment appears to have originated in an 1859 book entitled the *Memoir of Theophilus Parsons*. The author's father had allegedly met someone who had met someone who had been at a dinner party where Hamilton had made this alleged remark. This is tenuous evidence, and an exhaustive study by the Library of Congress concluded that the quotation is "without basis." Nonetheless, as Knott demonstrated, the canard surfaces again and again in the anti-Hamilton literature, in writings from people as diverse as William O. Douglas, I.F. Stone, and Henry Steele Commager. Knott acidly observes that prominent scholars lowered their scholarly standards in order to attack Hamilton. They did so because the phrase fit all their prejudices about capitalists—and thus about Hamilton.

The second Hamiltonian theme that drives some people crazy is his faith in concentrated authority. This has aroused antipathy on the right as well as the left. Hamilton feared inertia. He had seen too much weakness as an aide to General Washington during the Revolution and as an observer of the United States government under the Articles of Confederation. The pattern of his political life was to mobilize power. He used national power to upset local oligarchies and to make the United States an independent power in the world.

As Walling demonstrates in *Republican Empire*, Hamilton also had a sophisticated view of national morale, which he believed was as vital to the success of a nation as military morale is to the success of an army. If citizens have lost faith in their government, then weakness, cynicism, and despondency follow. Ineffective leadership produces, as Hamilton put it, a "loss of virtue." But a strong and effective government raises morale just as a strong officer raises the self-confidence of his men. Energetic leadership revives the "hopes of the people" and thereby gives a "new direction to their passions." Hamilton therefore favored a strong presidency, a strong military, a strong judiciary, and a national government that would be a catalyst, but not a nursemaid.

It is this strain of Hamiltonian thinking that led many conservatives

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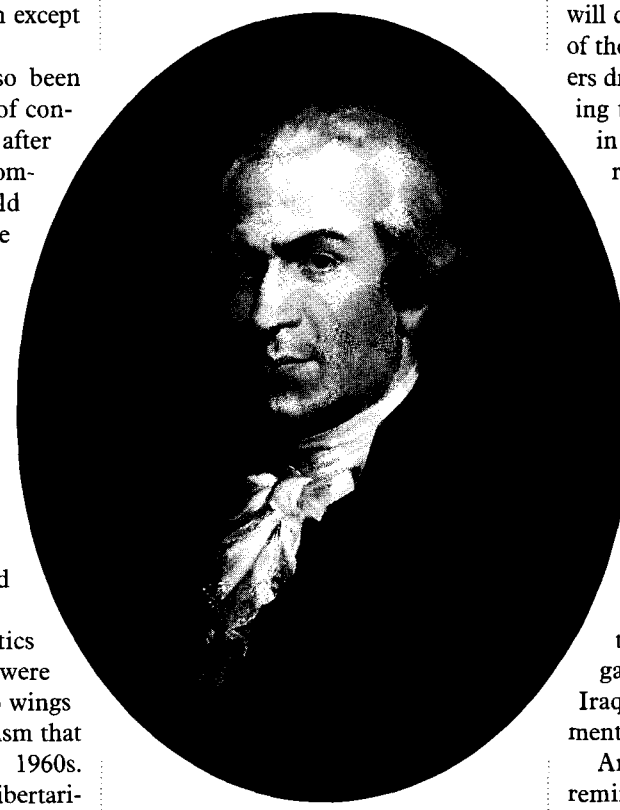
during the last half of the twentieth century to see Hamilton as an apostle of big government. When he was running for vice president in 1956, Richard Nixon was asked if he were a Hamiltonian or Jeffersonian. He replied that as a believer in states' rights, he was a Jeffersonian. "When Jefferson first ran for president, he ran as a Republican," Nixon said. The Goldwater-DeLay-Armey wing of the Republican party feared the federal government more than a drift of the nation toward vice, and they felt the government didn't need to do anything to rouse the spirit of the nation except get out of the way.

Similarly, liberals have also been suspicious of Hamilton's use of concentrated power. He believed, after all, in a powerful intelligence community, and during the Cold War, Hamilton was given the reputation as a tough foreign policy realist, who saw international politics as a mere struggle for power, divorced from larger ideals. Liberals became suspicious of the imperial presidency, which they associated with Hamilton. As Knott notes, Hamilton was sometimes portrayed as a Curtis LeMay in waistcoat and breaches.

What the Hamiltonian critics of both the right and the left were doing was articulating the two wings of the antiestablishment populism that swept the country in the 1960s. Whether they were hippies or libertarians, these Americans preached the virtues of small communities and the evils of large, national institutions. The lefties hated the national government because it was the home of the military-industrial complex. The righties hated the national government because it was the bastion of the liberal elites. But both sides were joined in their distrust of vibrant national institutions, which Hamilton held dear.

That mood has petered out over the past few years, with the decline of both the New Left and the Gingrich revolution. And it is natural therefore that Hamilton should be enjoying another one of his revivals, with academic books such as Knott's, Walling's, and Greenfeld's, as well as with more popular books, such as Richard Brookhiser's 1999 *Alexander Hamilton, American* and the recent appearance of a volume of Hamilton's writing in the Library of America series.

And since September 11, Hamilton suddenly seems central to our concerns. It has become once again obvious that our private lives require public protection. Confidence in national



institutions has soared. The presidency is once again the focus of attention. George Bush has emerged as a dynamic and energetic executive, involved in stoking national morale and giving direction to our patriotic passions. America, in short, now exemplifies both sides of the spirit of Hamilton: It is a vibrant commercial arena and an active political power.

Hamiltonianism has had such a troubled reputation because it demands the persistence of a tension—a perpetual balancing of liberty and power, individual initiative and national unity. Conservatives have sometimes prized the individual initiative part but rejected the national unity. Liberals have occasionally had the reverse reaction. But it should be clear, especially at this moment when the world is threatened by tyrants, that, as Hamilton wrote, "vigor of government is essential to the security of liberty." It is a time for individualistic nationalism.

And so now the debate goes global. Some nations fear the churning meritocracy that Hamilton championed and the United States represents. They call it "globalization" and charge that it will descend into a Darwinian struggle of the powerful against the weak. Others dread American unilateralism, fearing that so much power concentrated in the president's hand will lead to rash militarism and disorder.

But Hamiltonians counter that the world has more to fear from drift and disorder than from overweening American might, which is committed in any case to the cause of democracy more than national self-aggrandizement. Moreover, the Hamiltonians say, the free and churning meritocracy is the arena in which people are most likely to realize their fullest capacities—the fitting antidote to the stifling oligarchic regimes that one finds in Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, not to mention Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

And Hamiltonians are right to remind that world of the fact that Hamilton himself was more than just an economic man, interested in chasing money. He believed that the love of honor is the most powerful human motivation and that individuals, as much as nations, call out the best in themselves when they strive for the approbation of posterity. The essence of Hamiltonian happiness is to rise from obscurity to eminence, and then use one's power and position to make it easier for people in other places and future times to realize the full measure of their own life projects. That's what Hamilton sought to do in his lifetime, and what America seeks to do now. ♦

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Bush, Then and Now

President at the creation.

BY NOEMIE EMERY

Something strange has happened to books about George W. Bush begun before September 11: They have become more important and less conclusive; more interesting and less definitive; not about a man as he is but about a man as he was, a shadow of his present self.

Ambling Into History
The Unlikely Odyssey of George W. Bush
by Frank Bruni
HarperCollins, 224 pp., $23.95

The Big Enchilada
Campaign Adventures with the Cockeyed Optimists from Texas Who Won the Biggest Prize in Politics
by Stuart Stevens
Free Press, 298 pp., $25

Future historians, when they refer to "Bush I" and "Bush II," may not mean the father and the son. They may mean just the son—George W. Bush as he was before his war started, and George W. Bush as he is today. Bush I is the amiable man who ran two years ago in a peaceable country and seemed eager to narrow the scope of the government. Bush II is the war leader, grim and proactive, revving up the new warfare state.

Two books about Bush have appeared so far in his presidency: *The Big Enchilada* by Stuart Stevens and *Ambling Into History* by *New York Times* reporter Frank Bruni. The books' problem—and, oddly, their value—is that they describe a man who has vanished completely. They are thus a benchmark, a baseline from which to track changes, tools of value to armchair psychologists who will want to ask: How did Bush change? Why did he change? And can he change yet again?

Bush I—the Bush of these books—is an affable fellow, laid back and funny. He trips on his words but has a razor keen form of emotive intelligence. He loves his country, loves his ranch, and, even during the campaign, reveres the office he is fighting to occupy. At the same time, he has contempt for many political rituals and for some politicians—the source, Bruni thinks, of his numerous antics. At times, Bruni pictures him with a "thought balloon" over his head reading, "Do we really have to take all of this seriously?" He describes Bush as "rolling his eyes as he emerged from pro forma sessions" with standard political types. One type he found unappealing was his major political rival, whom he dismisses, in one quirky assessment: "The man dyes his hair. What does that *tell* you about him? He doesn't *know who he is*."

From Stevens, we learn that Bush's campaign team took it as a given that Gore would break the rules he agreed to and that much of their preparation for the candidates' debate consisted of training Bush to confront these diversions. Judd Gregg and Rob Portman, who played Gore in rehearsals, prided themselves on being duly obnoxious. In a late rehearsal for the third debate, Portman left his stool, walked over to Bush, and glared at him while he was speaking. As Stevens recounted, "Portman just stood there, staring, until finally the governor threw his arm around him, and kissed him on the head."

It is precisely this strange streak of feyness that endears Bush to both Bruni and Stevens, although it also forces Bruni to wonder about his ability to sustain any gravity. Not that Bush made extravagant claims for himself. "He told us more or less that he wasn't claiming to be the perfect president," Bruni notes, only "the best of the limited choices." About this, Bush seemed to have no doubts whatever. He knew he was better than Gore.

Yet there were visible from time to time the bones of Bush as he now is. He was not, it turns out, all that indifferent. As Stevens says:

> He hated delays, couldn't stand wasting time, and was always the one urging everybody to move faster, get it done, . . . let's go. He ran fast, worked fast, got up at dawn, and had a restless energy that seemed irrepressible. He liked to joke around and loved to laugh and tease anything or anyone even vaguely pretentious. But try showing up at 8:10 A.M. for an 8 A.M. meeting . . . or talk about something in vague generalities . . . you'd find out how laid back he was.

Stevens also noted his sense of proportion. "Bush was graced with the two qualities that help good pro quarterbacks—he could see a lot of the field at once, and he understood the natural rhythm of the season. He knew when to lay back and when to pour it on." He chose to pour it on in his acceptance speech before his convention and painstaking rehearsals for his debate with Gore, which he correctly fingered as the make or break moments.

Bruni, too, notes his capacity for intense, if sporadic, hard work. He points out that Bush was a steady consumer of serious books, and he attacks the picture of Bush as a dunderhead, a judgment "willfully selective, and oblivious to a contradictory body of fact." Bush scored higher on his verbal SAT scores than did Rhodes scholar Bill Bradley, and his college grades, while not distinguished, ranked with John McCain's and Al Gore's. Bruni also notes that Bush was extremely impressive in one-on-one settings (he seemed to grow worse with the size of the audience), and that campaign settings showed him off at his worst, "the exact opposite of how a politician—in order to succeed—should be."

The newly elected Bush, as Bruni draws him in *Ambling Into History*, is a conflicted figure, awed and impressed

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by his role and his office, yet resisting much of its trappings, cutting it back to life size. He made it, Bruni says, "the punctual presidency. The perfunctory presidency. The parsimonious presidency" when it came to expending himself. The tone was set at the inaugural balls, at which Bush and his wife danced twenty-nine seconds at the first ball, forty-six seconds at the second, and never more than sixty-seven seconds at any of the seven more that followed, coming home to the White House at 11:37, "more than an hour ahead of the schedule." Bush held his first news conferences in the modest pressroom, without the towering podium. "Hail to the Chief" was not played at his entrances. He retreated often to Texas, making clear his preference for it. His wife spent two of her first four weeks as first lady in Crawford. His speeches seldom ran more than fifteen minutes, and in them he often made fun of himself.

To Bruni, this seems of a piece with his early ambivalence, both in the campaign and before it. Bush was a man who had been pointed to politics by his father and family, and then drafted to run by the other Republican governors, pushed along by the choices of others. Here was a man who constantly told us how little he needed the presidency and how happy he would still be if things turned out badly. He had accepted the decision to run, but questions of commitment remained.

In 1946 John F. Kennedy was elected to Congress in the place left open by his dead older brother, beginning a decade or more of of his own ambivalence, alternating periods of concentration and serious work with life as an absentee, playboy, and dilettante. It took ten years before he fully possessed his ambitions, on the eve of his own run for president. This happens sometimes when a legatee and draftee has to pick his own way through the thicket of others' ambitions. The result was the same but the time frame was different: What happened to Kennedy over his brief years in office happened to Bush in one day. On September 11, Bush felt he began a new life. A friend of the president told Bruni in a "hushed, grave voice" that Bush realized that everything else in his life now paled in importance. "People close to him said that he felt, after a life initially filled with false starts and sloppy behavior that he had inherited his true purpose, and the task by which he would be judged and defined."

Bruni admits he is amazed at the transformation. He was surprised by the patience shown by the president, which he described as "remarkable," and by his flexibility in assembling a diverse coalition. But what astonished him most is the way that Bush, who always before craved the old and familiar, reacted to shock. This was the man who was openly homesick, who loved old friends, old routines, and safe places, who ate the same comfort food over and over, and took his own pillow with him on the road. He seemed to structure his life to cut down on surprises. But September 11 was the surprise of surprises, and Bush adapted to it without skipping a beat.

The phrase "ambling into history" may describe Bush in his stroll toward power. But Bush isn't ambling anywhere now. Nor does the word "noncommittal" still fit. ("Possessed" seems the better description.) "The Bush I knew was part scamp and part bumbler," says Bruni, "a timeless fraternity boy and heedless cutup, a weekday gym rat and weekend napster, an adult with an inner child that often brimmed to the surface or burst through."

Stuart Stevens's *The Big Enchilada* and Frank Bruni's *Ambling Into History* were conceived when Bush seemed an affable creature, headed for a a caretaker presidency in a country still on its vacation from history, fated to make his mark in compassionate increments. Then September 11 changed his presidency into one of the big ones and Bush himself into one of our more interesting leaders, whose psyche will be repeatedly prodded. If the drama of John Kennedy's life is the way in which he internalized and transformed his father's ambition, the drama of Bush is this sudden compression, one of the greatest before-and-after stories of all time. Neither Stevens nor Bruni could have foreseen how quickly his book would become both terribly outdated and exceedingly interesting. But then, of course, neither could we. ♦

Etiquette Today

Good manners are hard to find.

BY TRACY LEE SIMMONS

Debrett's New Guide to Etiquette & Modern Manners
The Indispensable Handbook
by John Morgan
St. Martin's Press, 384 pp., $27.95

"There are lots of us," Sebastian said of his aristocratic family to commoner Charles in *Brideshead Revisited*. "Look them up in Debrett." He meant *Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage*, the catalogue of British blueblood s first published in the eighteenth century; you can't get into the House of Lords without your own entry. To be listed means not that you have arrived, but that you have always been there, seemingly from the beginning, saying the right things and using the right forks all along. It has also meant that your behavior was precept for the unwashed. You were the one from whom the rest of us took our cues at the formal dinner table. We needed you.

But we don't need you anymore—or

Tracy Lee Simmons is director of the Dow Journalism Program at Hillsdale College. His Climbing Parnassus: A New Apologia for Greek and Latin *is being published this spring by ISI Books.*

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at least we don't think we do. We'll say whatever we like and use whichever fork we want, thank you. Only snobs worry about the do's-and-don'ts of social life. Etiquette belongs to the stuffy and prudish. It has no place in our brusque and self-important lives, the ubiquity of newspaper advice columns notwithstanding. And advice columns these days—have you looked lately?—are less likely to explain correct forms of wedding invitation and archaic rules of opening doors than who should bring the condoms on the third date. We're more practical now.

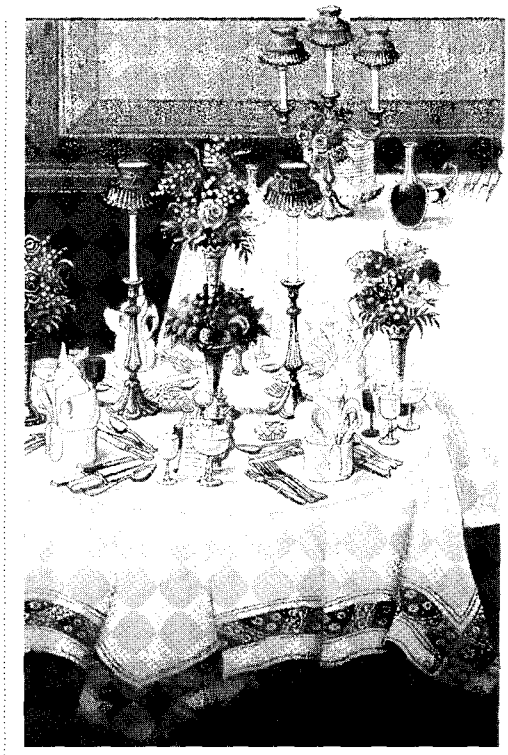
Social creatures, though, we remain. We still feel a little shaky when we're called upon to break bread or pop a cork. We're not too sure anymore what we should do when not wearing our sweats. Despite our vested belief that we no longer require rules of propriety for living the good life, we feel judged when choosing the wrong wine, slurping from the finger bowl, or sending funeral announcements with spammed e-mails. Someone's watching.

And we know who's doing the watching: the kind of people who would assiduously consult the pages of John Morgan's *Debrett's New Guide to Etiquette & Modern Manners*—not a big crowd in our time of "oafish, gauche" behavior and "crass populism." It's "the indispensable handbook," the cover tells us, for avoiding the odd *faux pas*, but that isn't quite true. It was compiled originally for etiquette-conscious Brits, who do all this better anyway, and most of us don't need to know how to put on weekends in the country or deal with our domestic staff, on which you'll find two separate chapters. We find here long and—for a few of us—fascinating sections on proper comportment in the company of royalty, aristocracy, and other Important People. When meeting the Queen at the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, for example, never, ever to refer to her as "you," but always as "Your Majesty" (let's remember that), and don't even think of mis-addressing The Most Reverend and Right Honourable the Lord Archbishop of York. It won't do.

Yet good manners, Morgan assures us, aren't simply a matter of class position or snobbery because "we all know of duchesses who behave disgracefully." (Gosh yes.) Indeed, good manners are enjoined upon all civilized people and due solicitude for our fellows makes for "a kinder, happier and better world." Quite true, and therein lies the value of this guide for Americans or anyone else determined not to be boors and take for granted the existence of other people. If this *Debrett's* can't give us an aristocratic title, at least it can help us adopt the graces that should come with one.

The first half of the book is devoted to "Rites of Passage," all those events marking our lives from birth through engagements, weddings, divorces, remarriages, to death and funerals. There's much here on the laws and practices governing the Church of England that we needn't bother about. We do learn how to word an invitation to the wedding of the daughter of "Mr. Nigel Bayliss Cox" to "Captain Jeremy Nicholas Standish," but if you know people with names like those, you'll probably not need much help. Still, this part has some nice morsels. Squalling children at weddings, for instance, plague most of us. This is especially a problem now, as "many modern parents, somewhat irritatingly, seem inseparable from their little darlings." The *Debrett's New Guide* says that the bride and groom, not those parents, decide if children may attend: If you find no mention of family on the invitation, assume that your child isn't welcome and that's an end to it. Find a sitter or stay home.

Then we have a few modern peculiarities of separation and divorce, including a section on "The Social Position of a Man Who 'Comes Out of the Closet', Ends His Marriage and Produces a Boyfriend." Morgan recognizes the stigma attached to this phenomenon, but he advises tolerance, or at least forbearance, endorsing the reaction of one woman whose husband left her for a "male Swedish lift engineer": "I would rather this happen than him having a sordid secret life, and quite frankly, because it's a man, I don't feel as if my role has been completely



usurped by another woman." Now that's *noblesse oblige*.

But the last half of the book, titled "Social Life," probably has more to teach us, as good behavior doesn't differ too much in civilized, or would-be civilized, circles. Since we no longer have maiden aunts to tell us how to phrase an invitation to a dinner or cocktail party, we probably need to look over the proper forms of invitation and calling card. The chapter on the spoken word, though, is even more helpful. Here Morgan's advice serves where our taste and tact break down. Our sense of *savoir-faire* is, after all, a little frayed these days.

The first rule to observe at a mixer, for example, is to look other people in the eye, laugh at unfunny jokes, and endure awkwardness for the sake of social harmony. "'Cocktail party eyes', i.e., glancing obviously over your companion's shoulder, to spy who else is at the party, are rude and hurtful." Morgan recalls the sadness of an older woman friend who observed, "I have really come to the conclusion that after a certain age, women become invisible." (Shame on somebody.) Humor needs delicate handling at a party. The

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A table setting from Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management, 1907 edition.

"brick-dropper" needs to watch his tongue. One man, a stranger to others engaged in a conversation, let drop that all students at a particular university were either "footballers or whores," a bad tactic if you don't know the folks you're talking to. When another man present said that his wife had attended that institution, the first man filled the breach: "Oh, really. What position does she play?" Very brave, but it wouldn't work with joyless types.

Even bores must be borne. In fact, they may be helpful. "Bores, although hardly a social asset, can be socially soothing, as they are usually so caught up with their own thoughts and words that others can switch off and momentarily rest their brains from conversation," which certainly seems a gentleman's expedient. How does Morgan advise us to get rid of them? Just say, "This is so interesting, but I do feel that I am monopolizing you." Walk away and the true bore won't have the faintest idea of what just happened.

Morgan tells us all we need to know: If we digest and live by these rules of thumb, the rest of our lives—or our social lives anyway—will probably fall into place. His dictates on personal relationships are merely codified consideration, though these are not always automatically understood, especially now. But even in the modern world there ought to be a code for dating, and he provides one, including the proper etiquette to be used by a woman not yet willing to invite a date into her house or apartment at evening's end. We also learn how to introduce "significant others" (see "Terms for Lovers") to our friends. And you wish to break up? Do so face-to-face: The "telephone call—or worse, the fax message—is quite inappropriate." (If you lifted an eyebrow of surprise at that last directive, you may need this book.)

While Morgan's ideas for handling private life are about consideration, those for behaving in public are about common sense. Proper variations exist among the ways we should act in the street, in a store, or on an airplane. And the section on behavior in restaurants could be pulled out and sold as a pamphlet. How many of us know how to order wine properly? Were we ever taught to moderate our voices so as not to be heard at neighboring tables? (We lack a separate heading here called "Personal Space.") How about leaving our dining partners stranded while we talk to other people recognized across the room? (See "Spotting Chums and Table-Hopping.") Just how do we complain about a meal without making perfect asses of ourselves?

Then there's ordering. Always be simple and unobtrusive; if you want *paupiettes de saumon avec petits turbans de concombres au jus de l'oseille sauvage*, save time and say, "I'd like the salmon, please." And smoking. Morgan reminds us that "restaurants are public places and thus require public toleration." When you're sitting in the smoking section, and especially if the smoker shows the thoughtfulness to refrain from lighting up till after the main course is finished, be a good sport and smile when he finally does. You, after all, with your name-dropping, nightmarish get-up, conspicuously righteous social concerns, and ape-like grammar may not be the best of company yourself. But you too are tolerated. In other words, if we all can bear the mental scars of second-hand boorishness, a few whiffs of tobacco smoke will do us little harm.

It all comes down to other people. Morgan tells us to do things as adults that we might have been smacked for not doing as children. But whenever we talk about bad manners in modern America (or modern Britain, for that matter), there's always more to say. To the next edition of this guide, Morgan should consider adding a chapter on "Road Etiquette," as most of us feel the sharpest brunt of contemporary selfishness and barbarity while driving. A driver gunning your car out of a lane on the interstate by riding its bumper is not only dangerous, it advertises the speeder's conviction that his time is more valuable than yours; your crawling at 45 mph in the left lane may signal another sort of egotism. Yet how many of us have had our morning moods changed for the better by another driver's slowing down to allow us to ease in front of him before an exit? We don't need to have been formally introduced to someone to show him kindness.

Nor do we really need to hail from the gentle classes in order to feel the more expansive, if more subtle, satisfactions afforded by committing simple acts of decency. Whether worn by the *nouveau riche* or—in Washington, say—by the *nouveau puissant*, good manners have always been hard to uphold, and that's particularly so now when they're denigrated for acting as brakes on our "authenticity" and inhibiting what we gratuitously like to call "self-expression." They do. Yet it is by these liberating rules that we avoid giving offense, always a prime object of proper behavior. With them we create pockets of comfort for people around us. They make for ease. They lift us, however momentarily, above our cloddish and grisly natures. So from time to time we ought to remember that we're not alone on this planet, flick off the cell phones, and give others a little more elbow room, if only out of the desperate hope that they might give us a little when the time comes. The effort is rarely wasted. ♦

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"The Massachusetts Democrat told *Roll Call* that he has been quietly keeping a record of his own memories of the momentous events of the last four decades—taking notes during key meetings and dictating into a tape recorder at the end of particularly significant days."

—*Roll Call* newspaper, reporting that Ted Kennedy has been secretly keeping a diary

Parody

My Diary
by Sen. Teddy Kennedy

August 7, 1974
President Nixon called in some congressional leaders. He said he was going to make an important announcement and then started weeping about something. The croutons on my salad were excellent. I ate them all first. Asked Sam Ervin if I could have his. He said, "No. Shut Up." Then on the way out I saw he hadn't finished his. I stuffed them in my jacket pocket and ate them on the way back to Capitol Hill.

January 25, 1977
Another White House lunch, this time with President Carter since President Nixon is out of office. There was an Egyptian guy there too, as well as a short Israeli guy. During the soup course I noticed that if you look at your reflection in the hollow side of the spoon you look upside down, but if you turn the spoon over you are right side up. I held a spoon up to one of the Israeli aides and his head looked upside down but his yarmulke didn't fall off!

February 4, 1981
The new president likes jelly beans. Ben Bradlee says he's a bad guy, but he looks OK to me. I was distracted during the meeting by a question that had come up in that month's issue of *Penthouse* Forum. Seems there are garages where all the mechanics are women. Must ask Dodd if he has them in Connecticut.

July 19, 1984
Democratic Convention in San Francisco. First convention at which I didn't get to give a concession speech since I forgot to run. Felt lonely. Also, went to some bars but no women there. Nearly drove off the bridge going home.

November 9, 1989
Historic day. Berlin Wall comes down. I call Gorbachev personally for high-level diplomacy. I open with a joke. I say, "Mr. Gorbachev, can you stick out your tongue and touch your nose?" He says, "No." And I say, "I can." And I stick out my tongue and touch my nose with my index finger. He doesn't get the joke since we're talking on the phone and he can't see me.

December 13, 1991
I think Quayle's cheating at tic-tac-toe. Amazing 47-game winning streak.

January 25, 2001
Met with George Bush. Looks much younger. The time off did him good. He offers to work with me on education bill. Admits he cheated on Spanish test too but didn't get caught. Gives me nickname: Jabba the Hutt. I give him nickname: George Bush. Croutons back on the White House salads. This time I ask for seconds. Experience counts.

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What Part of "No Law" Doesn't Congress Get?

David R. Henderson is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Suppose representatives of an industry pushed for a law giving them a monopoly on disseminating information about political campaigns and candidates. We would be outraged, right? Our outrage would be based on our belief in two important principles: first, that government should not grant monopolies, and second, that Congress should not violate freedom of speech and of the press.

It's time for outrage. Because the industry representatives have been pushing for such a law for years. And Congress is about to pass such a law. The industry: newspapers and broadcasters. The law: federal campaign finance "reform."

The new law would make it a crime for various groups to spend money advocating the defeat or election of a given candidate or ballot proposition. The restrictions apply to the thirty days immediately preceding a primary election and the sixty days preceding a general election. In other words, **competing voices are silenced when it matters most for them to be heard.**

So, for example, if a candidate had voted for restricting abortion or for restricting guns, neither a pro-choice group nor a pro–Second Amendment group would legally be able to spend money pointing these things out. During those thirty-day or sixty-day periods, by contrast, newspapers and broadcasters would still be free to report, fairly or unfairly, on the various candidates. Thus, the new law would give newspapers and broadcasters a monopoly on information. More accurately, it reduces competition—one of our saviors from the worst effects of this law will be the Worldwide Web.

You might say, "So what?" If you, like most of us, get tired of all the attack ads around election time, won't this law give a welcome relief? It might, although never underestimate the ability of smart people to get around restrictive laws. But even if it does give you relief, notice the cost of this relief. **The cost is our freedom of speech.** When the folks at the constitutional convention passed the First Amendment, they weren't trying to give free speech and freedom of the press only to people who were rich enough to own newspapers. They wanted everyone to have those freedoms so that people could speak out against whatever upset them. That's why they said, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging freedom of speech." What part of "no law" does Congress not understand?

Ironically, the advocates claim that their goal is to keep money out of politics. It takes a lot of money to buy a newspaper or TV station. Peter Jennings, his producers, and his writers will have their say on TV every night. The rest of us, though, who are already legally prevented from giving more than $1,000 to a candidate's campaign ($2,000 under the new law), will be further limited. We might want to give to groups that support our views, but those groups will be prevented from voicing those views when it most matters. What the law really does is keep competing voices out of politics.

— David R. Henderson

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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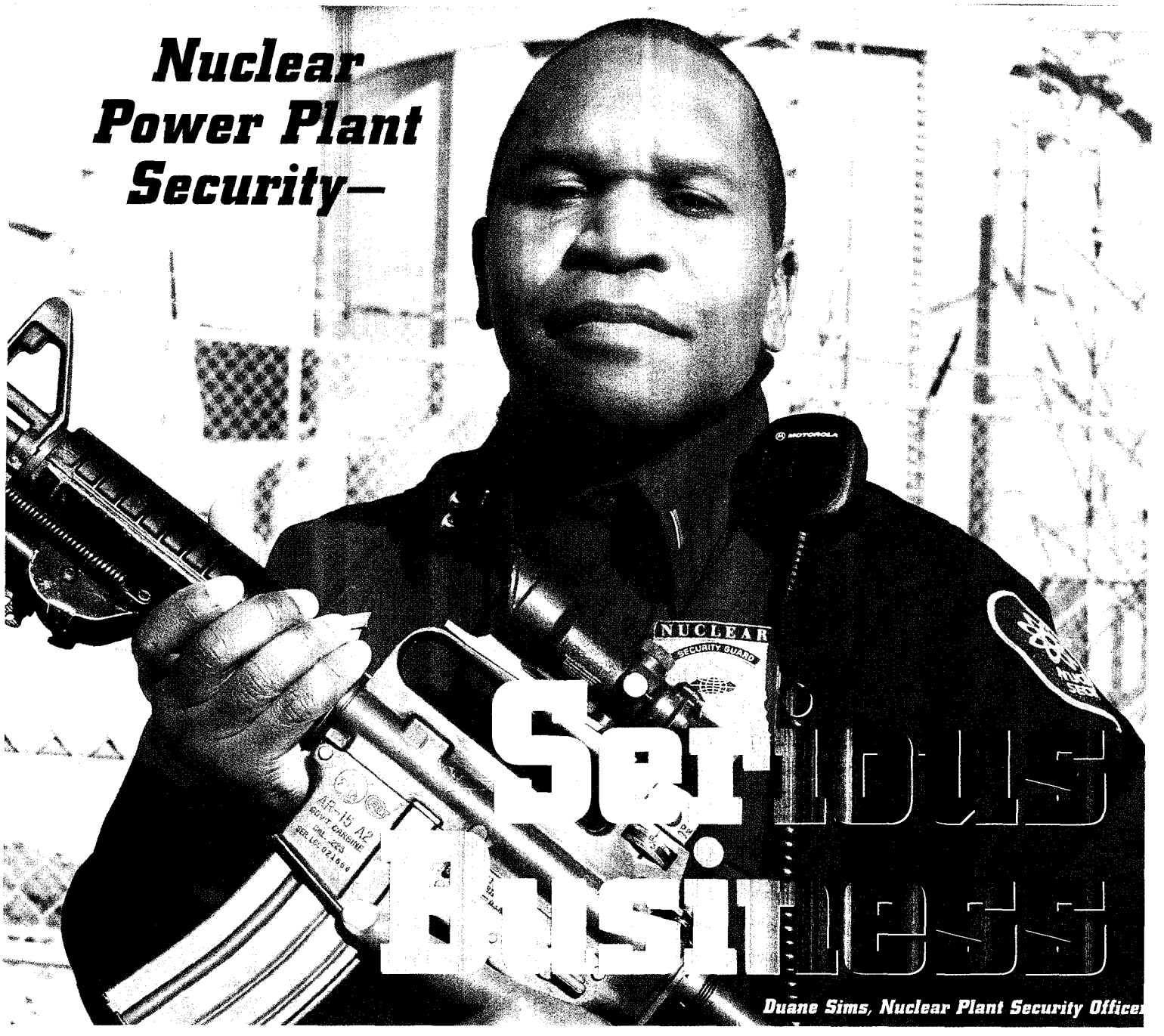

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